

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE

JUNE
1926

EDITED BY
LEONARD HUXLEY

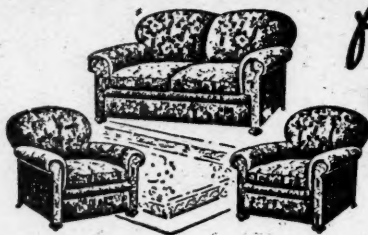


	PAGE
WHO RIDETH ALONE: Chapters XII-XIV .. By P. C. Wren	641
THE BOBOLI GARDENS, FLORENCE: A POEM .. By Vernon Knowles	670
SWIFT AND STELLA: A DIALOGUE .. By C. E. Lawrence	672
THE STUDENT AND THE TOWER: A SHORT STORY .. By Marmaduke Pickthall	682
WILL ADDISON'S LOVE LETTERS: II .. By C. A. Fowler and Leonard Huxley	694
THE PHILISTINE: A SHORT STORY .. By E. M. Delafield	711
THE DIGGERS By Katharine Keeling	723
BRIGHTER LONDON: A SHORT STORY .. By Laurence Kirk	741
TEN YEARS AFTER: THE BATTLE OF JUTLAND OR LITTLE FISHER BANK. AN ACCOUNT WRITTEN HOME IN JUNE 1916 .. By a Midshipman in H.M.S. Barham	749
LITERARY ACROSTIC No. 40	767

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SOME ASPECTS OF ITS WORK

I.—THE CARE OF BLIND BABIES AND GENERAL EDUCATION OF THE BLIND

The National Institute for the Blind is the largest institute of its kind in the world. Its object is to benefit the blind from birth to old age by developing their inner vision. How this is accomplished will be described on this page month by month.

The Care and Training of Blind Babies.—Recognising that "the child is father to the man," the Institute maintains three "Sunshine" Homes for Blind Babies—at Chorley Wood, Herts., Southport, Lancs., and Leamington Spa, Warwickshire—of which H.R.H. Princess Beatrice is President. In these Homes babies blind from birth are cared for and trained amongst ideal surroundings during the first five all-important years of existence. The babies are taught "to see with the fingers" by specially adapted kindergarten methods, and leave the Homes thoroughly competent to enter schools for the blind as happy, normal, robust, and intelligent children. To see the little "Sunshine" babies in their tubs, playing in their "Jazz" band, building sand-castles by the sea, gathering flowers in the meadows, making friends with pigs and horses and cows, is healing medicine for the most confirmed pessimist.

Chorley Wood College for Girls.—Near "Sunshine House" at Chorley Wood is the College for the Higher Education of Girls with little or no sight. Here, in a beautiful building presented to the Institute, blind girls are provided with a first-class education on public school lines. From mathematics and languages to sports and gymnastics, every possible item of higher education is included in the curriculum, and special attention is given to the cultivation of that *esprit de corps* so essential in a scholastic, business or social career. H.R.H. Princess Mary Viscountess Lascelles is President of the College.

Models and Maps.—In the general education of the blind, the Institute is naturally much interested. To all types of schools for the blind, educational models of objects so far apart as a buffalo and a balloon are loaned, while contour maps and embossed globes are provided for blind teachers and pupils alike, so that a knowledge of "geography by touch" can be imparted and acquired.

Braille.—The adequate education of the blind would be impossible without Braille, an embossed type which is read by the fingers. It may be considered as the sun of the blind world. The basis of Braille is a group of six dots like the six dots of a domino. By means of these six dots, variously arranged, the blind can read or write all words, numerals and music. Sixty-three separate designs can be made by the dots, and their inter-combination is inexhaustible. Braille can be written by hand. In this way single copies of special text books are prepared, either by sighted volunteers, or by the blind themselves from dictation. The Institute has a valuable library for students of such manuscript books.

(To be continued next month)

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By VISCOUNT HALDANE

A more 'popular' philosophical work by one of the great thinkers of the day. The investigation of the structure of experience is carried out in a manner fitted to those untrained in philosophy. 6s. net.

THE NEED for EUGENIC REFORM

By LEONARD DARWIN

'Will probably long be accepted as the standard presentation of the case for eugenics.'—*The Times*. 'Should be seriously studied by all Englishmen.'—*Sunday Times*. 12s. net.

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By W. M. LETTS

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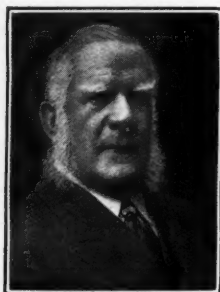
‘We heartily commend this book to the notice of preachers, teachers, and people who have brains.’—*Inverness Courier*.

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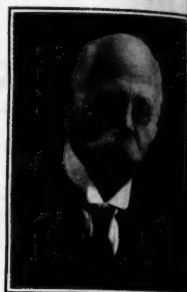
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BOOK NOTES FOR JUN



Left: The Rt. Hon. Sir EDWARD CLARKE, K.C., who has written a one-volume *Life of Benjamin Disraeli*.

Right: Major LEONARD DARWIN, whose 'The Need for Eugenic Reform' has been described as 'the standard work on the case for eugenics.'



A New Conception

LOOKING back upon a Spring List made noteworthy by reason of the importance of several books, the second series of *The Letters of Queen Victoria* dominates the picture. The interest and value of these volumes have been recognised alike by the critics and by that wide section of the reading public which is disposed to take literature with becoming seriousness. Their historical importance, admittedly great, is however dwarfed by their human interest; a great ruler is revealed through a greater woman. The light thrown upon the Queen is a searching one. These letters and journal entries reveal her character as it has never yet been revealed. There is presented a warmer, more humane picture of a royal lady largely misunderstood by her generation, rising above private sorrows and private inclinations to play a regal part at a time when called particularly for strength of mind, of purpose, and of comprehension. These letters should be read widely. Conditions change, but humanity and human nature remain singularly constant. The difficulties of one age are the trials of another. May we not learn from those who have acted, have succeeded, and have gone their way?

New Thin Paper Edition

THE first of the Thin Paper Edition of the books of Arnold Christopher Benson have appeared, and have been well received. They are *The House of Quiet* and *The Thread of Gold*. Of their kind no more popular books exist. Mr. Benson was a man who took the greatest pleasure in writing and he had a facility of expression and a sweetness of thought, which, despite those who would call him ineffectual, gained the hearts of thousands of people.

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BOOK NOTES FOR JUNE



Left: Baroness DEICHMANN, whose reminiscences are to appear under the title 'Impressions and Memories.'

Right: Miss ELSWYTH THANE, whose first novel 'Riders of the Wind' went to 2nd Impression the day after publication.



welcomed joyfully each succeeding volume. Whether or not his work will last is to be seen. It has been said that never did he go beneath the skin, never shake his readers by the power of his pen; but that is a critics' verdict. The true verdict lies with that wide public which reads and enjoys him.

Verse

MISS E. M. LETTS has compiled a new book of poems. It succeeds *Songs from Leinster* and has been entitled *More Songs from Leinster*. They are all in the same vein inspired by simple people in the fields and in the streets—and possess that charm which is the soul of their inspiration.

The Competition

THE preliminary announcement concerning the competition to be held in connection with *Sheaves from the Cornhill* stated that particulars would appear in the present issue. Readers will readily understand that business has been considerably upset during recent days. Arrangements made regarding this book have met with interference and, it being impossible to publish before July 1, the competition is held over. Next month, however, the particulars and an entry coupon will appear.

Speed

PUBLICATION of Ferdinand Tuohy's *The Cockpit of Peace* was unavoidably held up. It will, however, appear almost immediately, and it should be read. In the hands of a less capable writer it might have been bewildering, but Mr. Tuohy is a practical craftsman, and the tale moves swiftly from start to finish. In

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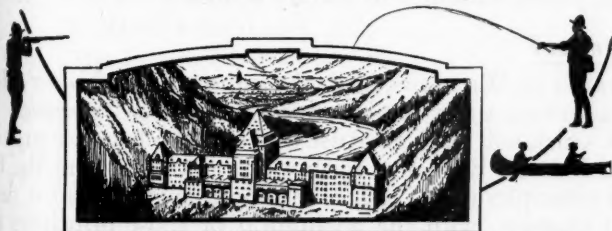
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BOOK NOTES FOR JUNE



Left: The Rt. Rev. CHARLES GORE, D.D., whose forthcoming book will be called 'Can We Then Believe?'

Right: Mrs. GERTRUDE PAINTER, the author of 'Tillage of The Poor,' whose play 'The Snow Storm,' was recently produced at the 'Q' Theatre.



racy cynicism, the book reflects the times and mentalities of which it tells. The scene changes from England to America, America to France, France to Germany, Germany to Italy without pause. personalities are interviewed and discussed; there is a joke with, and for, them all—and the end comes when it is least desired.

Early Success

SOME success has come early to *Riders of the Wind*, the first novel by Elswyth Thane. The day after publication, it went to second impression, thereby supporting the high opinion we formed on reading it for the first time. It is a story which has originality and suavity: the characters are clearly conceived; their adventures are portrayed with power and insight. The reviewers have treated it with kindness. Not only have they expressed their admiration for the book, but they have confirmed splendidly that this is no ordinary first novel and that it contains promise which should lead the young authoress to literary heights.

Economical

HERBERT G. WILLIAMS, M.P., the author of *The Nation's Income* has written a new book entitled *Politics and Economics*. It is a book which will be of great use to those who have not previously studied Political Economy, for not only does it present the fundamental principles of the science in simple language, but it deals, in several chapters, with the application of those principles to the problems and controversies of the day such as Socialism, Protection, Capital Levy, Unemployment, Empire Development, etc. Besides being a politician, Mr. Williams is an engineer and a mathematician. He is well known as a compelling public speaker, and in his book he writes on a heavy subject as interestingly as he talks.

The Novels of STANLEY J. WEYMAN

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'The reader will be scarcely conscious of taking breath. There is a perfect mastery of picturesque incident set down in excellent prose. . . . Mr. Weyman has proved that in the field of romance he is far superior to his competitors.'—*Illustrated London News*.

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18. CHIPPINGE.
19. LAID UP IN LAVENDER.
20. THE WILD GEESE.
21. THE GREAT HOUSE.
22. OVINGTON'S BANK.

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BOOK NOTES FOR JUNE

Cheaper Editions

RECENT additions to Mr Murray's 3/6 net novels and his Cheap 2/- net fiction have been in keeping with the standards set up in the past. Robert W. Mackenna, whose novels command attention is represented in each edition with *Bracken and Thistle-down* and *Flower o' the Heather* respectively. The latter was his first novel though not his first book. Many think it the best romance of the covenanting period in Scottish History that has been written. Maud Diver, whose name is now synonymous with Afghan romance is represented by *Siege Perilous*, *Unconquered*, *Strange Roads*, and *The Strong Hours*, each at 3/6 net and by *Lonely Furrow* at 2/- net; while Kathleen Norris, whose human stories of middle-class people and whose charming heroines are too well known to require description has four worthy 2/- editions in *Sisters*, *Josselyn's Wife*, *Harriett* and *The Piper*, and that universal favourite *Rose of the World*. The last of the 2/- editions is *The White Flag* by Gene Stratton-Porter whose stories of the Limberlost country—*Freckles* etc.—have achieved almost incredible sales. Finally, at 3/6 net, there is H. A. Vachell's *Quinney's Adventures* in which the praiseworthy Joe Quinney is shown at that delightful occupation of searching for—and finding—antique gems at Brummagem prices.

Next Month

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE for July will contain, among other contributions, a further instalment of *Who Rides Alone* the romance of the desert by P. C. Wren: *The Heart of a Continent*, being a study of conditions in China by Col. P. T. Etherton: *The Antiquity of Modern Man*, a layman's reading of Sir Arthur Keith by Lord Latymer: An unpublished Literary Correspondence by W. Forbes Gray, based on the collection of letters from celebrities which the Scottish bookseller, W. F. Watson, bequeathed to the National Galleries of Scotland.

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LITERARY ACROSTIC No. 40 ..	767

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Communications to the Editor should be addressed to the care of JOHN MURRAY, 50A Albemarle Street, W. 1.

All Contributions are attentively considered, and unaccepted MSS. are returned when accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope; but the Editor cannot hold himself responsible for any accidental loss. MSS. cannot be delivered on personal application. Articles of a political nature are not accepted. Every Contribution should be typewritten on one side of each leaf only, and should bear the Name and Address of the Sender; a preliminary letter is not desired.



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JUNE 1926.

WHO RIDETH ALONE.

CHAPTER XII.

A SECOND STRING.

THAT night I was honoured by a visit from the Hadji Abdul Salam, the chief *marabout* and *hakim* of this particular tribe, and a man whose immense influence and power seemed disproportionate to his virtues and merits. (One of the things the Occidental mind can never grasp, is the way in which the Oriental mind can divorce Faith from Works, the office from its holder, and yield unstinted veneration to the holy *priest*, knowing him to be, at the same time, a worthless and scoundrelly *man*.) . . .

The good Hadji crept silently into my tent, in the dead of night, and very nearly got a bullet through his scheming brain. Seeing that he was alone and apparently unarmed, I put my pistol under my pillow again, and asked him what he wanted.

The Reverend Father-in-Islam wanted to talk—in whispers—if I would take a most solemn oath to reveal nothing that he said. I was more than ready, and we talked of Cabbages and Kings, and also of Sealing-Wax and Whether Pigs have Wings. . . . And, after a while, we talked of Murder—or rather the Holy One did so. . . . He either trusted my keeping faith with him or knew he could repudiate anything I might say against him later.

I had a touch of fever again, and I was still in the state of mental turmoil natural to one who has just seen the edifice of a life's labour go crashing to the earth, and yet sits rejoicing among the ruins—thanking God for failure; his mind moaning a funeral dirge over the grave of all his hopes and strivings—his heart chanting a pæan of praise and thanksgiving over the saving of his Self. . . .

'Come, let us sit upon the ground
And tell sad stories of the death of Kings,
How some have been deposed, some sleeping killed,'

I quoted, from Etonian memories of Shakespeare's 'Richard the
VOL. LX.—NO. 360, N.S.

Second.' The Reverend Father looked surprised, and said he had a proposal to make. This was that he should contrive to effect my escape, and that I should return with an army, defeat the Emir, and make the Hadji Abdul Salam ruler in his place.

An alternative idea was suggested by the probable assassination of the Emir by one Suleiman the Strong, 'of whom I knew,' and who was even now somewhere in the Great Oasis, *and had visited the tents of the Holy Hadji!* Would I, on the death of the Emir, help the Hadji to seize the Seat of Power? He could easily poison Suleiman the Strong when he had fulfilled his vengeance—and his usefulness—or denounce him to the Tribe as the murderer of the Emir, and have him impaled alive. . . . The pious man swore he would be a true and faithful friend to France.

'As you are to your master, the Emir?' I asked.

The Hadji replied that the Emir was a usurper, and that no one owed fealty to a usurper. Moreover this was positively my only chance, as I was to be put to death shortly. . . . The Emir might then send a deputation to the Governor-General of French Africa, offering to make an alliance on receipt of a subsidy of a million francs and other advantages, and swearing that no emissary of the Governor-General's had ever reached him. Or he might just let the matter rest—merely keeping the women, killing me, and washing his hands of French affairs, or rather, declining to dirty his hands with them. . . . Or, of course, Suleiman might get him—and then the Wazir could be eliminated, and the good Hadji, with French support, could become the Emir and the Friend of France. . . .

'Supposing you could enable me to escape,' I said when the good Hadji had finished, 'I should not do so without the women. Could you effect their escape with me?'

He could not and would not. Here the Holy One spat and quoted the unkind words of the great Arab poet, Imr el Kais,

'One said to me, "*Marry!*"
I replied, "*I am happy—*
Why take to my breast
A sackful of serpents?
May Allah curse all woman-kind!"'

Two faithful slave-women always slept across the entrance to the *anderun*, where the girls were. Even if the slaves could be killed silently, it would be impossible to get so big a party away from the place—many camels, much food, *girbas* of water. . . .

No, he could only manage it for me alone. He could visit me at night and I could leave the tent in his *burnous* and green turban. . . . He could easily bribe or terrify a certain Arab soldier, now on sentry-go outside, and who was bound to be on duty at my tent again sooner or later. I could simply ride for dear life, with two good camels, and take my chance. But the women—no. Besides, if it ever came out that he had helped *me* to escape, it would not be so bad. . . . But as for getting the women away, he simply would not consider it. . . .

No—if I were so extremely anxious about the fate of my two women ('and, Merciful Allah! what are women, that serious men should bother about them?'), the best thing I could do was to consider his firm and generous offer—the heads of the Emir and his Vizier on a charger, and the faithful friendship to France of their successor in power, the Hadji Abdul Salam. . . . The Emir had announced his intention of making the boy-Sheikh not only Sheikh of his Tribe, but eventually Emir of the Confederation also. The Hadji would be the young prince's Spiritual Guide, Tutor, Guardian and Regent—until the time came to cut the lad's throat. . . .

'So Suleiman the Strong is here—and is going to assassinate the Emir, is he?' I said, after we had sat eyeing each other, warily and in silence, for some minutes.

(*I must warn the Emir as soon as possible.*)

'Yes,' replied the Hadji. 'And where will you be *then*, if I am your enemy?'

'Where I am now, I expect,' I replied, yawning with a nonchalance wholly affected.

'And your women?' asked the good man.

I ground my teeth, and my fingers itched to seize this scoundrel's throat.

'Take my advice and *go*,' he continued. 'Go in the certainty that you will have done what you came for—made an indissoluble and everlasting treaty of alliance between the *Franzawi* and the Great Confederation, through their real ruler, the Hadji Abdul Salam, Regent for the young Emir after the assassination of the Emir el Hamel el Kebir, impostor and usurper. . . . And if he is not assassinated, no matter—come with an army—and a million francs, of course—kill him, and make the boy nominal Emir. . . . I swear by the Sacred names of God that France shall be as my father and my mother, and I will be France's most obedient child. . . . Go, Sidi, while you can. . . .'

'Get two facts clearly and firmly into your noble mind, Holy One,' I replied. 'The first is that I do not leave this place without the lady Sitts; and the second is that France has no dealings whatsoever in assassination—nor with assassins!'

Then the reverend gentleman played his trump card.

'You are in even greater danger than you think, Sidi,' he murmured, smiling wryly with his mouth and scowling fiercely with his eyes. 'And our honourable, gracious and fair-dealing Lord, the Emir el Hamil el Kebir, is but playing with you as the cat with the mouse. . . . *For you are not the only mouse in his trap*—oh, no! Not by any means. . . . What are *Roumi* brains against those of the Arabs, the most wise, learned, subtle and ancient of all the races of the earth? . . . Why, you poor fool, *there are other messengers from another Power, here, in the Great Oasis*—and our fair-spoken Lord gives them audience daily in their camp. . . .'

I sprang to my feet. . . . Could this scoundrel be speaking the truth. . . ? A cold fear settled on my heart. . . . What likelihood was there of my leaving this place alive, if this were true and my own folly and madness had driven the Emir into the arms of these agents of some other Power? My life was nothing—but what of the fate of Mary Vanbrugh, when my throat was cut? . . . I broke out into a cold perspiration, and the fever left me. . . . My brain grew clearer and began to act more quickly. I smiled derisively and shook an incredulous head.

'And supposing I showed you their camp, Sidi?' sneered the Hadji. 'Suppose I gave you the opportunity to *see* a disguised *Roumi* and to *speak* to him?'

'Why—then I should be convinced,' I replied, and added—'And that would certainly change my—er—attitude toward you and your proposal. . . . When I have seen these men, and spoken with them—you may visit me again, with advantage to your purse. . . . I must play this foul-feeding fish on a long line, and match his tricks with tricks of my own. If it was to be *Roumi* brains against Arab brains here also—well, we would see what we should see. . . .'

'What manner of man is the leader of these emissaries of another Power?' I asked. 'How many of them are there? . . . What is the Emir's attitude? . . . Tell me all you can. . . . I can buy true information at a high price. . . .'

'So can these others,' grinned the pious Hadji. 'The leader has already shaken a bag of good fat Turkish *medjadies* before my eyes, and promised it in return for my help.'

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'I could shake a bag of something better than that dirty depreciated Turkish rubbish before your eyes, Hadji,' I replied, 'and pour it into your lap too. . . . Fine new coins of pure gold! French twenty-franc pieces! Beautiful for women's chains and bangles, and even more beautiful to spend on fine raiment, tents, camels, weapons, food, servants, rugs, horses . . .'

The rascal's eyes glittered.

'How many, Sidi?' he asked.

'As many as you earn. . . . As many as your help is worth. . . . Now talk. . . .'

'It is a small caravan, Sidi,' began this saintly *marabout*, 'but very well equipped. There is plenty of money behind it. . . . I never saw better camels nor weapons, and their hired camel-men are well-paid and content. . . . I do not know from whom they really come, but they have the blessing of the Father of the Faithful, God's Vicar upon Earth, who rules at Stamboul, and of the Great Sheikh of the Senussi. They say this openly in *mejliss*—and prove it with documents, passes, *firmands* and letters—but they talk privately, at night, with the Emir and the Wazir. . . .'

'What do they offer, openly?' I asked.

'The friendship and protection of the King of Kings, the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, Father of the Faithful, who dwells at Stamboul; and the friendship and alliance of the powerful Sheikh el Senussi. . . . A great Pan-Islamic Alliance is being formed, in readiness for a certain Day of *Jehad*. . . .'

'And in private?' I asked.

'That I do not know,' was the reply. 'Only that dog of a Wazir—may swine defile the graves of his ancestors—knoweth the mind of the Emir; and he alone accompanies him to the tents of the *Roumi*.'

'But this I do know,' he continued, '*they will give me wealth untold if I will poison you and the two Sitts*, whom they declare to be female spies of the French—sent to debauch and beguile the Emir with their charms. . . .'

'How do they know of our presence here?' I asked quietly, though my blood boiled.

'Oh, I visit them! . . . I visit them! . . . And we talk . . . we talk . . .' replied this treacherous reptile. 'They say I might, if I preferred, kill you and seize the Sitts for my *hareem* for a while, before I either slay them or cut out their tongues. . . . Dumb women are the only discreet ones . . .' and the Hadji laughed merrily.

I managed to smile coldly, while I burned hotly with fierce rage, and changed the subject.

'Are they Great Men, Lords, Sidis, Nobles, Officers, Born Leaders, these emissaries?' I asked.

'No,' replied the Hadji. 'They are low men on high horses. They do not walk, speak, look, give, ride, eat nor act as men of noble birth. . . .'

Through a narrow aperture at the entrance to my tent I could see that the stars were paling.

'You shall take me to their camp—now—Hadji,' I said, and pulled on *burnous*, *haik*, *kafiyeh*, and *fil-fil* boots.

The Hadji seemed a little startled.

'It would not look well for me to be seen visiting their camp now,' he said. 'It will soon be light. . . .'

'You need not visit their camp,' I replied. 'Take me to where I can see it, and then disappear.'

The good man sat awhile in thought.

'How much, Sidi?' he asked.

'I am not like those others,' I replied. 'I do not shake bags of money in the faces of pious and honest men, nor haggle and bargain. I richly reward those who serve me well—very richly—when their service is completed. . . . Now do as I say, or go away, and let me sleep in peace, for this chatter wearies me . . .', and I yawned.

The Hadji went to the doorway and colloqued with the soldier without. Returning, he said that he had dispatched my sentry to inform the guard at the camp of the emissaries that a man would shortly visit the latter, and must not be challenged, as he came from the Emir on secret business. The countersign was 'Stamboul.'

'This fellow, one Gharibeel Zarrug, is entirely faithful to me, Sidi,' he added. 'You can always send me messages by his mouth. I can arrange that he is very frequently on guard over your tent.'

We sat in silence for a few minutes, a silence broken by the Hadji's request for a taste of the *sharab* of the Infidels. I gave the good man a nip of cognac and I believe this bound him to my interests (until they clashed with his) more strongly than gold would have done. He had all the stigmata of the secret drunkard, and his tongue continually flickered at his lips like that of a snake.

The soldier returned and whispered.

'Come, Sidi,' said the Hadji, 'I will take you as far as is safe.'

'Safe for me or for you?' I asked.

'Nowhere is safe for *you*, Sidi,' was the reply. 'Take my advice

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I did my best by careful noting of direction, the stars, clumps of trees, tents, water-runnels and stones, to ensure my being able to make the return journey. . . . After we had walked for about a mile, the Hadji stopped in the black shadow of some palms and pointed to an orderly cluster of tents, just visible from where we stood.

‘That is their camp, Sidi,’ said the Hadji, ‘and beyond those palms are their camel-lines and servants’ quarters and the bivouac of a Camel Corps section—provided for the—ah—protection of the party . . .’ and without another word the Reverend Father vanished.

I walked boldly across to the principal tent, ignored the distant sentry, and entered. Two men slept on rugs, one an obvious Oriental, the other slightly fairer of complexion and with heavy moustache and huge beard. I studied his face by the light of the lantern that hung from the tent-pole, and learned nothing from it—but I suspected a disguised European. The man’s hands were larger than those of an Arab and there was more colour, in what I could see of his cheeks, than I should expect in those of a native. Turning to the lamp, I unhooked it and held it to his face, so that the light fell upon it while mine was in the shadow thrown by the back of the lamp—a common bazaar affair of European make, such as hangs on the walls of the cheap hotels of Algeria and Tunis. I then drew a bow at a venture. I struck the sleeper heavily on the chest, and, as he opened his eyes and sat up, said coolly :

‘*Bon jour, mon cher Monsieur Becque !*’

My shaft winged true.

‘*Himmel !*’ he exclaimed, half awake and startled into unguarded speech. And then, collecting his scattered wits, said in French—‘*What is it ? Who are you ?*’ and his hand went under his pillow.

‘Keep still !’ I said sternly, and my revolver came from under my burnous, and he looked into the muzzle of it.

And, as he looked, the cast in his left eye was obvious.

‘Who are you ?’ he said again in French.

And then a third voice added, in the same tongue, ‘Whoever you are, drop that pistol. *Quick*—I have you covered.’

Like a fool, I had absolutely forgotten the second man in my excitement at discovering that it was indeed *Becque*, the man whom

Raoul d'Auray de Redon had seen in Zaguig before its occupation by the French. . . . My old friend, *Becque*! . . .

An awkward dilemma! . . . If I dropped my revolver I should be at their mercy, and if I did not I should probably be shot in the back and buried in the sand beneath their tent—for even if they did not know who I was, they knew (thanks to the triple traitor, Abdul Salam) that I was a rival and an enemy. . . . Who else would speak French in that place? How neatly should I be removed from their path!

None but the rogue Abdul Salam knew that I was aware of their existence—much less that I had actually entered their tent. . . . The sentry of course did not know me, in my disguise, and the sound of the pistol-shot could easily be explained, if it were heard and inquiries were made. . . . An accident. . . . A shot at a prowling pariah cur or jackal that had entered the tent and alarmed one of them, suddenly awakened. . . . I should simply *disappear*, and my disappearance would be a soon-forgotten mystery, and probably ascribed to sudden flight prompted by fear—for had I not abused the Emir with unforgettable and unforgivable insults! . . . And then what of Mary Vanbrugh and Maudie—the French female spies sent to beguile and debauch the Emir and win his consent to the treaty? . . . *Mary Vanbrugh would think I had fled, deserting her—in the name of Duty!*

All this flashed through my mind like lightning. What should I do? . . . What about a shot into Becque's vile heart and a swift wheel about and a shot at the Arab? No—he would fire in the same second that I shot Becque, and he could not miss me at a range of six feet. . . . Nor could I, even in such a situation, shoot a defenceless man in his bed. . . . Perhaps I could have done so in the days before Mary Vanbrugh had made me see Life and Honour and true Duty in so different a light. . . . *Then* I should have said, 'What would France have me do?' Now I said, 'What would Mary Vanbrugh have me do?' And I somehow felt that Mary would say: 'Live if you can, and die if you must—but not with this defenceless man's blood on your hands, his murder on your conscience . . . ' even if she knew what he had plotted and proposed concerning her and her maid.

Perhaps a couple of seconds had passed—and then the voice behind me spoke again with sharp menace.

'*Quick*—I am going to shoot! . . . '

'*So am I,*' said yet a fourth voice coolly, in Arabic, and even,

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in that moment, I marvelled that the Arab speaker should so aptly have gathered the import of the French words—though actions, of course, speak louder than words. I recognised the voice of the Emir.

'Everybody shooting everybody this morning,' added the Vizier—invisible shadow of his master.

Keeping Becque covered I turned my head. Two excellent European revolvers threatened the fellow who, green with fright, put his automatic on the ground. I put my own back into the holster beneath my *burnous*. Evidently the Emir was making one of his unobtrusive visits to the excellent Becque—and he had come in the nick of time. Or was he so well served that he had known of my visit here, and come to catch me and Becque together?

'*Kief halak*, Emir el Hamel el Kebir,' I said coolly. 'The sound of thy voice is sweet in my ears and the sight of thy face as the first gleam of the rising sun.'

'In the circumstances I do not doubt it, *Roumi*,' was the reply, 'for you stood at the Gates of Death. . . . What do you here?'

'I am visiting an old friend, Sidi Emir,' I replied, 'and my purpose is to resume a discussion, interrupted, owing to circumstances beyond his control, many years ago.'

The Emir and the Vizier, their inscrutable, penetrating eyes fixed on mine, stared in thoughtful silence.

'Explain,' said the Emir at length.

'Lord Emir of Many Tents and Ruler of many Tribes, Leader of the Faithful and Shadow of the Prophet,' I said, 'you are a person of honour, a warrior, a man of your hands as well as a man of your word. . . . Like me, you are a soldier. . . . Now, I once honoured this dog—for an excellent reason—by crossing swords with him. For an even better and greater reason I would cross swords with him again—and finish, utterly and completely, the duel begun so long ago. . . . I tell you, a lover of your People, that this cur would betray his People. I tell you, a respecter of women, that this white reptile is trying to achieve the dishonour and death of two white women. . . . You may think I wish merely to kill one who is a rival for your favour and alliance. Were that all he is, I would not try to defeat him thus. I would meet a fair adversary with fair attempts to out-bid and out-manceuvre him. . . . But as he has secretly plotted most foully against my country (and his own), against the lives and honour of the lady Sitts, and against my life—I ask you to let me meet him

face to face and foot to foot and sword to sword—that I may punish him and rid my country of a matricidal renegade. . . .’

The two Sheikhs stared in silence, stroking their beards, their hard unreadable eyes, enigmatic, faintly mocking, watching my face unwaveringly.

‘Swords are sharp and final arguments—and some quarrels can only be settled with them,’ mused the Emir. ‘What says our other honoured guest . . . ?’

‘Oh, I’ll fight him!’ spoke up Becque. ‘It will give me real pleasure to kill this chatter-box. . . .’

He turned to me with a smile that lifted one corner of his mouth and showed a gleaming dog-tooth.

‘And so you are the bright *de Beaujolais*, are you?’ he marvelled. ‘Well, well, well! Think of that now! . . . De Beaujolais—the Beau Sabreur of the Blue Hussars! . . . De Beaujolais, the Beau Sabreur of the Spahis and the Secret Service! . . . De Beaujolais, the Hero of Zinderneuf! . . . Well, my friend, I’ll make you de Beaujolais of a little hole in the sand, shortly, and see you where the birds won’t trouble you—and you won’t trouble *me*! . . . The great and clever de Beaujolais! . . . Ha! Ha! Ha!’ And the brave, brazen rogue roared with laughter.

(But how in the name of his father the Devil did he know anything of the affair at Zinderneuf?)

‘You shall fight as soon as the light is good,’ said the Emir. ‘And you shall fight with Arab swords—a strange weapon to each of you, and therefore fair for both’; and, calling to Yussuf Fetata, he bade him send for two swords of equal length and weight and of exactly similar shape.

CHAPTER XIII.

‘MEN HAVE THEIR EXITS . . .’

HALF an hour later, Becque and I stood face to face in the shadow, cast by the rising sun, of a great clump of palms. We were stripped to the waist, and wore only baggy Arab trousers and soft boots. Each held a noble two-edged sword, pliant as cane, sharp as a razor, exact model of those brought to the country by Louis the Good and his Crusaders. I verily believe they *were* Crusaders’ swords, for there are many such in that dry desert where nothing

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rusts and a good sword is more prized, cared for, and treasured than a good woman. I looked for a knightly crest on the blade of mine. Had there been one, and had it been the very crest of the de Beaujolais family (for I have ancestors who went on Crusade)—what an omen! What a glorious and wonderful coincidence! What a tale to tell!

But I will be truthful and admit that there was no private mark whatever. Such things do not happen in real life—though it is stark fact that a venerable friend of mine killed a Dahomeyan warrior in Dodd's advance on Dahomey, and took from him the *very Gras rifle that he himself had carried as a private in 1870!* (He knew it both by its number and by a bullet-hole in the butt. It had evidently been sold to these people by some dealer in condemned army stores.)

The only fault I had to find with my beautiful Crusader-sword was that it had no hand-guard, nothing between handle and blade but a thin straight cross-piece. However, the same applied to Becque's weapon.

I looked at Becque. He 'peeled well' as English boxers say, was finely muscled, and in splendid condition. Whether the strangeness of our weapons would be in his favour as a stronger if less finished swordsman, or in mine, remained to be seen. He spat upon his right hand—coarse and vulgar as ever—and swung his sword mightily, trying its weight and balance.

In a little group under the trees stood the Emir and the Vizier; young Yussuf Fetata (to whose family the swords belonged); the powerful dwarf who had first captured me, Marbruk ben Hassan; the Emir's body-servant, El R'Orab the Crow; the Egyptian-Arab colleague of Becque, and a few soldiers.

'Hear my words,' said the Emir, and his hawk-like stare was turned to Becque, 'for the least attempt at foul play, I will shoot you dead. . . . When I say "*Begin*"—do so. When I say "*Stop*," do so instantly. . . . I shall not say "*Stop*" while both of you are on your feet, unless one of you does anything unbecoming a chivalrous warrior. . . .'

I bowed and gave the Emir the sword-salute. . . .

'*Begin!*' he said a moment later, and Becque repeated the very tactics of our previous duel. He rushed at me like a tiger, his sword moving like forked lightning, and I gave my whole mind and body to parry and defence. I was not in the best of health and strength, thanks to my wound, my sleepless nights of anxiety,

and my confinement to the tent—and if Becque chose to force the pace and tire himself, I was content.

All critics of my 'form' have praised my foot-work, and I used my feet and brain to save my arm, for the swords were heavy. At the end of his first wild whirling attack, when his sword ceased for a moment to rise and fall like a flail in the hands of a madman, I fainted for his head, and, as his sword went up I lunged as though I held a sabre. He sprang back like a cat, and then made a Maltese-cross pattern with his sword—as though he were a Highlander wielding a light claymore—when I pursued. Nothing could pass that guard—but it was expensive work, costly in strength and breath, and he was very welcome to make that impressive display—and I kept him at it by light and rapid feints. . . .

Suddenly his sword went up and back, as to smite straight down upon my skull, and, judging that I had time for the manœuvre, I did not parry—but sprang to my left and slashed in a smart *coup de flanc* that took him across the ribs beneath the raised right arm. A little higher and he would never have lifted his arm again; but, as it was, I gave him a gash that would mean a nice little blood-letting. In the same second, his sword fell perpendicularly on my right thigh, merely slicing off an inconsiderable—shall I say 'rasher'—and touching no artery nor vein of importance. I had drawn first blood—first by a fraction of a second—and I had inflicted a wound and received a graze. '*Mary Vanbrugh*,' I whispered.

I saw momentary fear in Becque's eyes, but knew it was only fear that I had wounded him too severely for him to continue the fight. He began to retreat; he retreated quickly; he almost ran backward for a few paces—and, as I swiftly followed, he ducked, most cleverly and swiftly, below my sword—as it cut sideways at his neck—and lunged splendidly at my breast. A side step only just saved me, for his point and edge ploughed along the flesh of my left side and the other edge cut my upper arm as it rested for the moment against my body. . . . But the quick *riposte* has always been my strong point, and before his sword returned on guard, I cut him heavily across the head. Unfortunately it was only a back-handed blow delivered as my sword returned to guard, and it was almost the hilt that struck him. Had it been the middle of the edge—even at such close quarters and back-handed—the cut would have been more worthy of the occasion. As it was, it did friend Becque no good at all. '*Mary Vanbrugh*,' I whispered, a second time.

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And then my opponent changed his tactics and used his sword two-handed. One successful stroke delivered thus would lop off a limb or sever a head from a body—but though the force of every blow is doubled in value, the quickness of every parry is halved, and, since my opponent chose to turn his weapon into a mace, I turned mine into a foil, instead of obediently following his tactics. It was rhinoceros against leopard now, strong dog against quick cat—possibly Goliath against David. . . .

Hitherto we had crossed swords point downwards, as in ‘sabres,’ now I held mine point upward as in ‘foils,’ and dodged and danced on my toes, feinting for a thrust. Cut or thrust? . . . A cut from Becque would be death for de Beaujolais—and I was very sure a thrust from de Beaujolais would be death for Becque. . . .

My foe forced the pace again. . . . He rushed like a bull, and I dodged like a matador. A hundred times his sword swept past my head like a mighty scythe, and so swift was he that never had I a chance for the matador’s stroke—the *coup de grâce*. We were both panting, our breath whistling through parched throats and mouths, our bare chests heaving like bellows. . . . We were streaming with sweat and blood—and, with glaring glassy eye, Becque was fiercely scowling, and he was hoarsely croaking:

‘Curse you! you damned dancing-master! God smite you! . . . Blast you, you jumping monkey!’ with each terrific stroke; and de Beaujolais was smiling and whispering ‘*Mary Vanbrugh* . . . *Mary* . . . *Mary* . . .’ but, believe me, de Beaujolais was weakening, for he had lost a lot of blood, his left arm was a useless weight of lead, he was growing giddy and sick and faint—and suddenly Becque, with a look of devilish hate and rage upon his contorted face, swept his sword once more above his head; and this time swept it up too far! It was well above his head—and pointing downward behind him—for a stroke that should cleave me to the chin, when I dropped my point and lunged with all my strength and speed. . . . ‘*Mary Vanbrugh!*’ . . .

I had won. My sword stood out a foot behind him. . . . He tottered and fell. . . . My knees turned to water and I collapsed across his body. ‘*Exit Becque!*’ thought I, as I went down—and perhaps de Beaujolais too! . . .

I recovered in a few minutes, to find that the Emir himself was holding my head and pouring glorious cold water on my face, chest,

and hands. . . . The Vizier was washing my cuts. . . . Becque was not dead—but, far from surgeons and hospitals, no man could long survive the driving of that huge sword through his body. . . . Poor devil!—but he *was* a devil!

'The Sitt has bandages and cordials,' I said to the Emir, as I rose to my feet, and he at once despatched R'Orab the Crow to bid the slave-girls of the *anderun* to ask the lady Sitt to send what was needed for a wounded man. I did what I could for the unconscious Becque and then I resumed my *jelabia*, *haik*, *kafiyeh* and *burnous*, after drinking deeply of the cool water, and dabbing my bleeding wounds. The congratulatory Arabs crowded round me, filled with admiration of the victor. Would they have done the same with Becque, if he had won? . . . Nothing succeeds like success. . . . To him that hath shall be given. . . . *Væ victis*. . . . Thumbs down for the loser. . . .

'Do you send for medicaments for yourself or for your enemy, Sidi?' asked the Emir.

'For my enemy, Emir,' I replied. 'It is the Christian custom.'

'But he is your enemy,' said the Emir.

'Anyone can help an injured *friend*,' I replied. 'If that is held to be a virtue, how much more is it a virtue to help a fallen foe?'

Sententious—but suitable to the company and the occasion. The Emir smiled and shook my hand in European fashion, and the Vizier followed his example. I was in high favour and regard—for the moment—as the winner of a good stout fight. . . . *For the moment!* . . . What of the morrow, when their chivalrous fighting blood had cooled—and my foul insults and abuse were remembered? . . .

And then appeared Mary Vanbrugh, following El R'Orab, who carried the medicine chest and a bottle and some white stuff—lint or cotton-wool and bandages. I might have known that she would not merely send the necessary things, when she heard of wounds and injuries. She glanced at the semi-conscious Becque, a hideous gory spectacle, and then at me. I suppose I looked haggard and dishevelled and there was a little blood on my clothes—also I held the good sword, that had perhaps saved her life and honour, in my hand.

'Your work?' she said in a voice of ice and steel.

I did not deny it.

'More *Duty*?' she asked most bitterly, and her voice was

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scathing. 'Oh, you *Killer*, you professional paid hireling *Slayer*. . . Oh, you *Murderer* in the sacred name of your noble *Duty*! . . . Tell these men to bring me a lot more water—and to make a stretcher with spears or tent-poles and some rugs . . . ' and she got to work like a trained nurse.

'Tear up a clean *burnous*, or something, in long strips,' she said as I knelt to help her . . . 'and then get out of my sight—you *sicken* me. . . .'

'Are you hurt, too?' she asked a moment later, as more blood oozed through from my thigh, ribs and arm.

'A little,' I replied.

'I am glad you *are*,' said Miss Vanbrugh; 'it serves you right'—and then . . . 'Suppose it had been *you* lying here dying . . . ?'

I supposed it, and thanked the good God that it was not—for her sake.

When she had cleaned, sterilised and bandaged Becque's ghastly wound, she bade me tell the Arabs to have him carried to the Guest-tents and laid on my bed, that she might nurse him! Her orders were obeyed, and, under her superintendence, the wounded man was carried away with all possible care. I noticed that the Emir bade Yussuf Fetata conduct the Egyptian-Arab back to his tent, and see that he did not leave it.

When everything possible had been done for Becque, and he lay on my bed motionless and only imperceptibly breathing, Mary Vanbrugh turned to me:

'I'll attend to *you* now, *Killer*,' said she.

'Thank you, Miss Vanbrugh,' I replied, 'I can attend to what scratches I have quite well.'

She looked at me, as in doubt. Her instinctive love of mothering and succouring the injured seemed to be at war with her instinctive hatred of those who cause the injury.

'Let me see the wound in your side,' she said. 'If you can look after your leg yourself, you cannot dress and bandage a wound in the ribs properly.'

'I wouldn't trouble you for worlds, Miss Vanbrugh,' I replied. 'Doubtless the noted Doctor Hadji Abdul Salam will treat me.'

. . . These Arab specialists have some quite remarkable methods, such as making one swallow an appropriate quotation from the *Q'ran*, written on paper or rag, correctly blessed and suitably sanctified. . . . Do me a lot of good, I should think. . . . And possibly Maudie would lend a hand if the Doctor thinks a bandage

... ' And then loss of blood, following a terrific fight (on an empty stomach) had its humiliating effect on my already enfeebled body, and down I went in a heap. . . .

When I recovered consciousness, Mary Vanbrugh and a very white-faced Maudie were in the tent, and I was lying, bandaged, on some rugs. Dear Becque and I—side by side!

'Brandy,' said Mary Vanbrugh to Maudie, as I opened my eyes. Maudie poured some out, and gave it to me. I drank the cognac, and was very soon my own man again. How often was this drama to be repeated? . . . First the Touareg bullet; now Becque's sword. What would the third be? I was soon to know.

I sat up, got to my feet, stiff, sore, bruised and giddy, but by no means a 'cot-case.'

'Lie down again at once, Killer,' said Mary Vanbrugh sharply.

'Thank you, Miss Vanbrugh,' I replied. 'I am all right again now, and very greatly regret the trouble I have given you. I am most grateful. . . .'

'I do not desire your gratitude, Killer,' interrupted the pale, competent, angry girl.

' . . . To Becque—I was going to say—for being so tender with me,' I continued. And then I said a thing that I have regretted ever since—and when I think of it, I have to find some peace in the excuse that I was a little off my balance.

'It is not so long since you were fairly glad of the killing-powers of a Killer, Miss Vanbrugh,' I went on, and felt myself a cad as I said it. . . . 'On a certain roof in Zaguig, the Killer against eight, and your life in the balance. . . . I apologise for reminding you. . . . I am ashamed . . .'

'I am ashamed . . . I apologise—humbly, Major de Beaujolais,' she replied, and her eyes were slightly suffused as I took her hand and pressed it to my lips. . . . 'But oh! why *do* you . . . why *must* you . . . all these fine men . . . that Mr. Dufour, Achmet, Djikki, and now this poor mangled, butchered creature. . . . Can you find *no* Duty that is help and kindness and love, instead of this Duty of killing, maiming, hurting . . . ?'

Yes—I was beginning to think that I could find a Duty that was Love. . . .

Becque rallied that night, incredibly. His strong spirit flickered,

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flared up, and then burnt clearly. I was getting myself a drink, being consumed with thirst, when he spoke :

'So you win, de Beaujolais,' he said quietly.

'I win, Becque,' I replied.

I would not rejoice over a fallen foe, and I would not express regret to a villainous renegade and a treacherous cur—who, moreover, had plotted the death, mutilation and dishonour of two white girls (and one of them *Mary Vanbrugh*).

'It's a queer world,' he mused. 'You all but shot me that day, and I all but got you hanged. . . . The merest chance saved me, and luck saved you. . . .'

I supposed this to be the semi-delirious wanderings of a fevered mind. . . . But the brave evil Becque did not look, nor sound, delirious.

'What do you mean?' I said, more for the sake of saying something than seriously to ask a question.

'Ah—the brilliant de Beaujolais—Beau Sabreur of the Blue Hussars and the Spahis! . . . Bright particular star of the *Bureau Arabe*, the Secret Service, the Intelligence Department of the French Army in Africa! . . . You think you know a lot, don't you, and you're very pleased with your beautiful self—but you don't know who it was that turned your own men from down-trodden slaves into bloodthirsty mutineers, do you? . . . And you were never nearer death in all your days. . . . Do you know, my clever friend, that if those cursed Arabs had not attacked at that moment, nothing could have saved you—thanks to me? . . . Do you know that your own men were going to hang you to the flag-staff and then burn the place and march off? . . . "*Another mutiny in the discontented and rotten French Army*"! . . . Headlines in the foreign Press! . . . Encouragement to the enemies of France! . . . That would have been splendid, eh?'

I thought hard, and cast back in my memory. . . . Most certainly I had never attempted to shoot Becque, and still more certainly I had never been in danger of hanging, at the hands of the gentleman. In spite of his apparent command of his faculties, he must be wandering in his mind—indeed, a place of devious and tortuous paths in which to wander.

Silence fell, disturbed only by the droning of the flies which I shook from his face. A few minutes later the closed eyes opened and glared at me like those of a serpent.

'Beautiful, brainy de Beaujolais,' the hateful voice began again.

'How nearly I got you that day and how I have cursed those Arabs ever since—those black devils from Hell that saved you. . . .'

Delirium, undoubtedly. . . . I brushed the flies again from the sticky lips and moistened them with a corner of a handkerchief dipped in lemon-juice.

'And when and where was that, Becque?' I asked conversationally.

'I suppose the mighty warrior, the Beau Sabreur, the brain of the French Army, has forgotten the little episode of Zinderneuf? . . .'

Zinderneuf! . . . What *could* this Becque know of Zinderneuf? . . . Was yet another mystery to be added to those that clustered round the name of that ill-omened shambles?

Zinderneuf! . . . Mutiny . . . What was it Dufour had said to me when I ordered the parade before entering that silent fort, garrisoned by the Dead, every man on his feet and at his post . . . ('The Dead forbidden to die. The Fallen who were not allowed to fall?'). . . . He had said '*There is going to be trouble. . . . They are rotten with cafard and over-fatigue. . . . They will shoot you and desert en masse! . . .*' Could this Becque have been there? . . . Utterly impossible. . . .

Again I thought hard, cast back in my memory, and concentrated my whole mind upon the events of that terrible day. . . . Dufour was there, of course. . . . Yes, and that excellent Sergeant Lebaudy, I remembered, the man who was said to have the biggest voice in the French Army. . . . And that punishing Corporal Brille whom I once threatened with a taste of the *crapaudine*, when I found him administering it unlawfully. . . . I could see their faces. . . . Yes. . . . And that trumpeter who volunteered to enter that House of the Dead. . . . Of course . . . he was one of the three Gestes, as I learned when I went to Brandon Abbas in England to be best man at George Lawrence's wedding. . . . Lady Brandon was their aunt. . . . Yes, and I remembered two fine American soldiers with whom I spoke in English—men whom I had, alas, sent to their deaths by thirst or Arabs, in an attempt to warn St. André and his Senegalese, that awful night. I could recall no one else. . . . No one at all. . . .

'And what do *you* know about Zinderneuf, Becque?' I asked. His bitter sneering laugh was unpleasant to hear.

'Oh, you poor fool,' he replied. 'I know this much about Zinderneuf—that you nearly stepped into your grave there. . . . Into the grave that *I* dug for you there. . . . However, this place will do equally well.'

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With my mind back in Zinderneuf, I absently replied :

'You think I shall find my grave *here*, do you, Becque ?'

'I most earnestly hope so,' replied Becque. 'I truly hope, and firmly believe, this Emir will do to you and your women what I have urged him—and tried to bribe him—to do.'

I kept silent, for the man was dying.

'You are not out of the wood yet, Beautiful de Beaujolais, Beau Sabreur,' the cruel, bitter voice went on. . . . 'My colleague has a brain—if he hasn't much guts—and he has money too. And the power to put down franc for franc against you or anybody else, and then double it. . . . Oh, we shall win. . . . And I'd give my soul to survive to see the hour of success—and you impaled living on a sharpened palm-trunk and *your Secret Service women given to the Soudanese soldiers*. . . .'

I bit my lips and kept silence, for the man was surely dying.

In spite of the considered opinion of which Miss Vanbrugh had delivered herself, I am a humane man, and if I fight my foe as a soldier should fight him, I try to be *sans rancune* when the fight is over.

While Becque was awake and conscious, I would sit with him, bear with his vileness, and do what I could to assuage the sufferings of his last hours. . . . Sometimes men change and relent and repent on their death-beds. . . . I am not a religious man, but I hold tenaciously to what is good and right, and if approaching death brought a better frame of mind to Becque, I would do everything in my power to encourage and develop it. . . . I would meet him more than half-way, and if his change of heart were real, I would readily forgive him, in the name of France and of Mary Vanbrugh. . . .

'Well, Becque,' I said, 'I shall do my best against your colleague—and I would give a great deal to survive to see the hour of success, and you, not impaled living, but speeded on your way, with a safe conduct, back to whence you came.'

'You mealy-mouthed liar,' replied my gentleman. 'You have killed me, and there you sit and *gloat*. . . .'

'Nonsense, Becque,' I replied. 'I am glad I won the fight—but I'd do anything I could to help or ease or comfort you, poor chap. . . .'

'Another lie, you canting hypocrite and swine,' Becque answered me.

'No,' I said. 'The simple truth.'

'Prove it, then,' was the quick answer.

'Well?' I asked, and rose to get him anything he wanted or to do anything that he might desire.

'Look you, de Beaujolais,' he said, 'you are a soldier. . . . So am I. . . . We have both lived hard—and my time has come. . . . Nothing can possibly save me—here in the desert without surgeons, anæsthetics, oxygen, antiseptics—and I may linger for days—wounded as I am. . . . I *know* that nothing on God's earth can save me—so do you. . . . Then let me die now and like a soldier. . . . Not like a sick cow in the straw. . . . Shoot me, de Beaujolais. . . .'

'I can't,' I replied.

'No—as I said—you are a mealy-mouthed liar, and a canting hypocrite, full of words and words. . . .' answered Becque; and then in bitter mockery he mimicked my '*I'd do anything I could for you, poor chap!* . . .'

'I can't murder you, Becque,' I said.

'You *have*,' he replied. 'Can't you complete your job? . . . No. . . . The Bold-and-Beautiful de Beaujolais couldn't do that—he could only gloat upon his handiwork and spin out the last hours of the man he had killed. . . . You and your Arab-debauching women from the stews of Paris. . . .' And he spat.

'One of those women worked over you like a nurse or a mother, Becque,' I said. 'She lavished her tiny store of cognac, *eau-de-Cologne*, antiseptics and surgery stuff on you——'

'As I said,' he interrupted, 'to keep me alive and gloat. . . .'

Silence fell in that hot, dimly-lighted tent, and I sat and watched this Becque. After a while he spoke again.

'De Beaujolais,' he said, 'I make a last appeal as a soldier to a soldier. . . . Don't keep me alive, in agony, for days—knowing that I shall be a mortifying mass of gangrene and corruption before I die. . . . Knowing that nothing can save me. . . . I appeal to you, to you on whose head my blood is, to spare me *that*. . . . Put your pistol near me—and let Becque die as he has lived, with a weapon in his hand. . . .'

I thought rapidly.

' . . . Come, come, de Beaujolais, it is not *much* to ask, surely. It leaves your lily-white hands clean and saves your conscience the reproach that you let me suffer tortures that the Arabs themselves would spare me. . . .'

I came to a decision.

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my request. . . . If I have no chance, and you *know* I have none—as surely as you know the sun will rise—then, if you are a man, a human creature with a spark of humane feeling in you—put your pistol by my hand. . . . You can turn your back if you are squeamish. . . . Do it, de Beaujolais, and I will die forgiving you and repenting my sins. . . .’

His voice broke, and I swallowed a lump in my throat as I rose and went to where my revolver hung to the tent-pole. My sword had passed below his lungs and had penetrated the liver and stomach and probably the spinal cord. He would never leave that bed, nothing upon earth could save him, and his long lingering death would be a ghastly thing. . . . It *was* the one thing I could do for him. . . . I put the pistol beside his right hand.

‘Good-bye, Becque,’ I said. ‘In the name of France and Mary Vanbrugh I forgive the evil you tried to do to them both. . . . Personally I feel no hate whatsoever. . . . Good-bye, brave man—good-bye, old chap. . . .’ And I touched his hand and turned my back.

The bullet cut my ear. I sprang round and knocked the pistol from Becque’s hand. ‘You treacherous *devil*!’ I cried.

‘You poor gullible *fool*!’ he answered, with the wry smile that showed the gleaming fang.

The sentry raised the door flap and looked in, and Mary Vanbrugh rushed from the *anderun* half of the tent, as I picked up my revolver.

‘*Oh! What is it?*’ she asked breathlessly.

‘An accident,’ replied Becque. ‘One of the most deplorable that ever happened. . . . I shall regret it all my life. . . .’ And he laughed.

There was no denying the gameness and stout heart of this dear Becque.

‘More Duty, I thought, perhaps, Major de Beaujolais,’ observed the girl.

‘It was. As I conceived it, Miss Vanbrugh,’ I replied.

After looking at Becque’s bandages and giving him a sip of hot *soupe*, made with our compressed meat-tablets and a little cognac, she returned to the *anderun*, bidding me drink the *soupe*, for Becque could do little more than taste it.

‘You win again, you dog!’ said Becque, as soon as we were alone. ‘What a fool I was to aim at your head—with a shaking

hand ! . . . But I did so want to see those poor brains you are so proud of. . . . *Now*, will you kill me ? ’

‘ No,’ I answered.

‘ *I know you won’t !* ’ he replied. ‘ You haven’t the guts. . . . *And I know I shall recover.* . . . Why, you fool, I breathe almost without pain. . . . My lungs are absolutely sound. . . . You only gave me a flesh wound and I heal splendidly. Always have done. . . . ’

The poor wretch evidently did not know that the bandages hid as surely mortal a wound as ever man received. His talk of fatal injuries and certain death, which he had supposed to be a ruse that would gull and fool me, was but the simple truth.

‘ I’ll be on my feet in a week, you witless ape,’ he continued, ‘ and I’ll get you yet ! . . . Believe me, Beautiful de Beaujolais, I won’t miss you next time I shoot. . . . But I hope it won’t come to that. . . . I want to see you die quite otherwise—and then I’ll deal with your Arab-debauching harlots. . . . But I’ll get you somehow ! I’ll get you, my Beau Sabreur ! . . . ’

He raised himself on one elbow, pointing a shaking hand at my face, spat, and fell back dead. . . .

CHAPTER XIV.

FOR MY LADY.

‘ The worldly hopes men set their hearts upon,
Turn ashes—or they prosper ;
Anon, like snow upon the desert’s dusty face,
Lighting a little hour or two—are gone. . . . ’

BECQUE’s body having been borne away at dawn for burial, I soon began to wonder if the events of the previous day and night had really occurred or whether they were the nightmare imaginings of a delirious fever-victim. My wounds were real enough, however, and though slight, were painful in the extreme, throbbing almost unbearably and making movement a torture. I would not have been without them though, for three times that day Mary Vanbrugh dressed them, and if I scarcely heard her voice, I felt the blessed touch of her fingers. But she attended me as impersonally and coldly as a queen washing the feet of beggars, or as a certain type of army-surgeon doctoring a sick negro soldier. As she left the tent

on the last of her almost silent visits, she paused at the door-curtain and turned to me.

'What exactly *was* that shot in the night, Major de Beaujolais?' she asked.

'It was Becque shooting at me,' I replied. 'You did not suppose that it was me shooting at Becque, did you, Miss Vanbrugh?'

'I really did not know, Major de Beaujolais,' answered the girl. 'I should not be so foolish as to set *any* limit to what you might do in the name of *Duty*! . . . Nothing *whatever* would surprise me in that direction, now, I think. . . .'

'A man's duty *is* his duty,' I replied.

'Oh, quite,' she answered. 'I would not have you deviate a hair's-breadth from your splendid path. . . . But since the day you informed me that you would have left me to the mercies of the Touareg—had there been but one camel—I have been thinking . . . a good deal. . . . Yes, "*A man's duty is his duty*," and—if I might venture to speak so presumptuously—a woman's duty *is her* duty, too. . . .'

'Surely,' I agreed.

'And so I find it *my* duty to hinder you no further, and to remain in the Oasis with these fine Arabs—*under the protection of the Emir d'Hamel el Kebir*. . . .'

'What!' I shouted, startled out of my habitual calm and courtesy. 'You find it your "*duty*" to do *what*?'

I felt actually faint—and began to tremble with horror, fear, and a deadly sickness of soul.

'I think you heard what I said,' the girl replied coldly, 'and I think you know that I always mean what I say, and say what I mean. . . . Oh, believe me, Major de Beaujolais—I have some notions of my own on *duty*—and it is no part of mine to hinder yours. . . .'

I drank some water, and my trembling hand spilt more than my dry throat swallowed.

'So I shall remain here,' she went on, 'and I think too that I prefer the standards and ideals of this Emir. . . . Somehow I do not think that *anything* would have induced *him* to leave a woman to certain death or worse. . . . Not even a *treaty*!' and the bitter scorn of her accents, as she said that word, was terrible. Her voice seared and scorched me. . . . I tried to speak and could not.

'Nor do I feel that I shall incur any greater danger here than I should in setting off into the desert again with a gentleman of your pronounced views on the subject of the relative importance of a woman and a piece of paper. . . . Nor shall my maid go with you. . . . I prefer to trust her, as well as myself, to these people of a less-developed singleness of purpose . . . and I *like* this Emir—enormously.'

I found my voice. . . . Clumsily, owing to my wounds, I knelt before her. . . .

'Miss Vanbrugh . . . *Mary* . . . ' I cried. 'This is inhuman cruelty. . . . This is *madness*! . . . Think! . . . A girl like yourself—a lovely fascinating woman—*here . . . alone*. . . . You must be insane. . . . Think. . . . A *hareem*—these Arabs. . . . I would sooner shoot you here and now. . . . This is sheer incredible *madness*. . . .'

'Yes—like yourself, Major de Beaujolais,' she replied, drawing back from me. 'I am now "mad" on the subject of *Duty*. . . . It has become an obsession with *me* too—(an example of the influence of one's companions upon one's character!)—and I find it my duty to leave you entirely free to give the whole of your mind to more important matters—to leave you entirely free to depart alone as soon as your business is completed—for I will be no further hindrance to you. . . . Good-bye, and—as I do not think I shall see you again—many thanks for bringing me here in safety, and for setting me so high a standard and so glorious an example. . . .'

I do not know what I replied—nor what I did. I was *all* French in that moment, and gave full rein to my terrible emotion. But I know that Mary Vanbrugh left the tent with the cold words: 'Duty, Major de Beaujolais—before *everything*! We will *both* do our Duty. . . . I shall tell the Emir el Hamel el Kebir that I intend to remain here indefinitely, under his protection, and that I hope he will give you your precious treaty, and send you off at once. . . . My conscience—awakened by you—will approve my doing what *I* now see to be *my* duty. . . . Good-bye, Major de Beaujolais. . . .'

I sat for hours with my pistol in my hand, and I think I may now claim to know what suffering *is*. . . . Never since that hour have I had a word of blame for the poor soul who blows his brains out. . . .

I saw no one else that day, but during the night I was awakened from a fitful and nightmare-ridden doze by the Hadji Abdul Salam.

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Once more he rehearsed his proposals and warnings, modified now by the elimination of Becque.

ONE: Would I, by his help, escape alone, immediately, and return with a strong French force and make him France's faithful (well-paid) vassal Emir Regent of the Great Confederation? Or

Two: Would I promise him a great bag of gold and my help in his obtaining the Regency of the Confederation, if he procured the death of the Emir at the hands of Suleiman the Strong, and solemnly swore to poison the said Suleiman at as early a date thereafter as convenient? (He could not poison the Emir, for that distrustful man took all precautions against such accidents.)

He fully warned me that by rejecting both his proposals I should most certainly come to a painful and untimely end, and my two women become *hareem* slaves. He was in a position to state with certainty and truth that the Emir had decided to kill me and the Arab-Egyptian, keep the money, camels, weapons and other effects of both of us, and then accept the earlier offer of the Great Sheikh el Senussi and make an offensive and defensive alliance with him.

I heard him out, on the chance that I might glean something new. When he had finished and I had replied with some terseness, I pointed to the doorway and remarked:

'And now, Holy One, depart in peace, before I commit an impiety. In other words—get out, you villainous, filthy, treacherous dog, before I shoot you. . . .'

The Hadji went, and as he crept from my tent, he ran into the arms of the Sheikh el Habibka el Wazir—and I saw him no more in this life, and do not expect to see him in the next. I heard that he fell ill and died shortly after. People are apt to do so if they obstruct the ways of desert Emirs.

I lay awake till dawn, probably the most anxious, distracted, troubled man in Africa. . . . Mary Vanbrugh. . . . France. . . . My Service. . . . My uncle. . . . My Duty. . . . An outraged, unforgivably insulted despot, a fierce, untrammelled tyrant whose 'honour' was his life—and in whose hand lay the fate of the two women for whose safety I was responsible.

Things came to a head the next night. The Emir el Hamel el Kebir and the Sheikh el Habibka el Wazir entered my tent, and, as though nothing had happened to disturb the friendliest relationship, were cordially pleasant. Much too friendly methought, and, knowing Arabs as I do, I could not suppress the feeling that their visit boded me no good. I grew certain of it—and I was right.

After formal courtesies and the refusal of such hospitalities as I could offer, the Emir said :

'Your Excellency has the successful accomplishment of this mission much at heart ?'

'It would be a fine thing for your people and pleasing to mine,' I replied. 'Yes, I have it much at heart.'

'Your Excellency has the welfare and happiness of the Sitt Miriyam much at heart ?' went on the sonorous voice.

Was there a mocking note in it ?

'So much so that I value it more than the Treaty,' I replied.

'And the other night Your Excellency called me *dog* and *swine*, and *filthy black devil*, I think,' was the Emir's next utterance.

'Yes,' he went on, as I was silent. 'Yes. And Your Excellency has these matters much at heart. He admires this fair woman greatly. Perhaps he loves her ? *Possibly he would even die for her ?* . . .'

The Vizier watched the Emir, stroked his beard, and smiled.

'Your Excellency would achieve a great deed for France ? . . . But perhaps he loves France not so much that he would die for her ! Perhaps this woman is as his Faith, since he is an Infidel ? . . . Yes, perchance she is his Faith ? . . .'

The two men now stared at me with enigmatic eyes, cruel, hard and unfathomable, the unreadable alien eyes of the Oriental . . . There was a brief silence, a contest of wills, a dramatic struggle of personalities.

'Are you prepared to die for your Faith ?' asked the Emir—and I started as though stung. Where had I heard those words before ? Who had said them ? I had. I had used those identical words to Becque himself at St. Denis, years ago. . . . Well, perhaps I could make a better showing than Becque had then done—as much better as my cause was nobler.

'I am,' I replied in the words of the dead man.

'You shall,' said the Emir, as I had said to Becque—and I swear that as he said it, the Vizier's face fell, and he smote his thigh in anger. . . . Was he my friend ?

'Listen,' said the Emir. 'These two women shall go free, in honour and safety, on the day after Death has wiped out the insults you have put upon me. After those words "*dog*," "*son of a dog*," "*swine*," "*black-faced devil*," I think that we may not both live. . . . Nor would I slay with mine own hand the man who comes in peace and eats my salt. . . . Speak, Roumi. . . .'

'What proof and assurance have I that you would keep your word, Emir ?' I asked.

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'None whatever—save that I have given it,' was the reply. 'It is known to all men who know me, that I have never broken faith; never failed in promise or in threat . . . *If you die by your own hand to-night, your white women are as free as air.* I, the Emir el Hamel el Kebir, swear upon the Holy Q'ran and by the Beard of the Prophet and the Sacred Names of God that I will deliver the two Sitts, in perfect safety, wheresoever they would be.'

'And if I decline your kind suggestion that I should commit suicide?' I sneered in my fear, misery, and rage.

'Then you can slink away in safety; the signed Treaty goes with you; the Sitt Miriyam enters the *hareem* of the Sheikh el Habibka el Wazir; and the Sitt Moadi enters mine. . . .'

'You Son of Satan! You devilish dog——' I began.

'Choose—do not chatter,' said the Emir.

Now my revolver was in its holster and my sword leant against the tent-pole. . . . Let me think. . . . Kind God, let me think. . . . If I could shoot both these dogs and the sentry who would rush in—could I get the girls out of their beds and on to camels and away—I, single-handed, against the bodyguard of Soudanese, whose lines were not a hundred yards away, and against the whole mob that would come running? Such things were done in the kind of books that Maudie read, no doubt. No. I was utterly and hopelessly in the power of these men. And what of the Treaty, if it *were* possible for us to escape?

'Since you give your word that the Treaty shall be signed and loyally kept, or, on the other hand, that the two Sitts shall be escorted to safety—why not do these wise and noble actions without sullyng them with murder?' I asked.

'Do you not punish those who mortally insult *you*?' asked the Emir.

'I fight them,' I replied, and my heart gave a little bound of hope as an idea occurred to me. 'I fight them—I do not murder them. Fight me to-morrow, Emir—and if I die, let the Sitts go, taking the Treaty with them.'

'And if I die?' asked the Emir.

'It will be the Hand of Allah,' I replied. 'It will be a sign that you have done wrong. The Vizier must have orders to see that we all go in safety, bearing the Treaty with us.'

The Emir smiled and shook his head.

'A brave man would fight me with the condition that the Sitts go in any case and take the Treaty with them—and that I go if I win,' said I.

'I do not fight those who come to me in peace and receive my hospitality,' answered the Emir with his mocking smile. He was but playing with me, as the cat plays with the mouse it is about to kill.

'No? You only murder them?' I asked.

'Never,' replied the Emir. 'But I cannot prevent their taking their own lives if they are bent upon it. . . . If you die to-night, the Sitts leave here to-morrow. You *know* I speak the truth. . . .'

I did. I rose, and my hand went slowly and reluctantly to my holster. Life was very sweet—with Mary so near and dear. I grasped the butt of the weapon—and almost drew and fired it, with one motion, into the smiling face of the Emir. But that could lead to nothing but the worst. There was no shadow of possibility of any appeal to force doing anything but harm. I drew my revolver, and the hands of the two Arabs moved beneath their robes.

'Your pistol is unloaded,' said the Sheikh, 'but ours are not.'

I opened the breech of the weapon, and saw that the cartridges had been extracted. . . .

'Get on with the murder, noble Emir—true pattern of chivalry and model of hospitality,' I said, and added: 'But remember, if evil befalls the Sitts, never again shall you fall asleep without my cold hand clutching you by the throat—you disgrace to the name of man, Mussulman and Arab. . . . You defiler of the Koran and enemy of God.'

'If you mean that you wish to die that the Sitts may go free, and my honour may be cleansed of insult . . . ' replied the Emir, and he softly clapped his hands, as the Vizier angrily growled an oath in his beard. . . . *Was* he my friend? . . .

The slave who was the Emir's constant attendant, and whom he called El R'Orab the Crow, stooped into the tent.

'Bring the cur and some water,' said the Emir.

While the man was gone I had a brilliant idea—the idea of a lifetime. . . . *Roumi* brains against Arab brains—and trick for trick. I saw my way to saving both Mary and the Treaty! I rose again, quickly produced the Treaty from the back of my map-case, and got sealing-wax and matches from my bag. . . .

'*Sign the Treaty,*' I said, '*and let me go.*' I had not thought to use that red stick of wax in the hour of my death. . . .

The Emir, smiling scornfully, signed with my fountain-pen, and sealed with a great old ring that bore cabalistic designs and ancient Arabic lettering. The Vizier, grinning cheerfully, witnessed the signature—both making a jumbled mass of Arabic scratchings

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which were their 'marks' rather than legible signatures. . . . I could understand the Emir's contempt, but not the obvious joy of the Vizier.

El R'Orab the Crow returned, leading a pariah-dog on a string, and carrying an earthenware bowl of water. Producing a phial from beneath his sash, the Vizier poured what looked like milk into the bowl. The slave set it before the dog, and retired from the tent. Evidently the matter had been arranged beforehand.

'You shall see what you have so wisely escaped, oh Brave Son of Courage and Chivalry,' said the Emir, with cutting scorn.

As such dogs invariably do, this one gulped the water greedily. The imperturbable Arabs, chin on hand, watched. Scarcely had the dog swallowed the last of the water, when it sneezed, gave a kind of choking howl, staggered, and fell. In less than a minute it was dead. I admit that it seemed to die fairly painlessly. Again the Emir clapped his hands. R'Orab the Crow entered, and the dog and the bowl were removed.

'Bring us tea,' said the Emir; and, returning, the slave brought four steaming cups of mint tea, inevitable accompaniment of any 'ceremony.' Into one the Emir poured the remainder of the contents of the phial and passed it to me.

'We would have drunk together,' he said, 'you drinking that cup—and we would have wished prosperity and happiness to the Sitts. "*May each marry the man she loves,*" we would have said, and you would have died like a brave man. . . . Now cast the poison on the ground, oh Seller of Women, and take this other cup. Drink tea with us—to the prosperity of our alliance with France instead.'

And beneath the smiling eyes of the Emir and the fierce stare of the Vizier, I said in Arabic: '*The Treaty is signed and witnessed, Emir!*' and in my own mother-tongue I cried: '*Happiness to my Lady, and success to my Country,*' and, rising to my feet, I drank off the poisoned cup—clutched at my throat—tried to speak and choked . . . remembered Suleiman the Strong and tried to tell the Emir of his presence and his threat . . . choked . . . choked . . . saw the tent, the lamp, the men, whirl round me and dissolve—and knew I was falling, falling—falling through interstellar space into Eternity—and, as I did so, was aware that the two Arabs sprang to their feet. . . . Blind, and dying, I heard a woman scream. . . . I . . .

(To be continued.)

The story will be published in book form by Mr. John Murray at the end of July, under the title of *Beau Sabreur*.

IN THE BOBOLI GARDENS, FLORENCE.

(1)

GREEN malachite pillars of the cypresses :
Here in this garden-hall you seem to hold
The sky's wide roof of lapis-lazuli,
Whose centre is the sun—a plaque of gold.

Autumn has not yet slipped her russet dress.
The pool of Winter calls her to come down ;
He holds out silver arms to her : too soon
She'll go—and he will clasp her till she drown. . . .

(2)

Dust are those hands now, hands that wrought and placed,
At careful intervals, these marble shapes :
Ganymede, with his eagle close beside ;
Young Bacchus pulling at the clustered grapes ;

Venus with mirror and a carven box ;
Cupid with stretchéd wings and resting bow ;
Young Daphnis treading flowers with his feet :
His eyes uplifted and his pipes ablow ;—

Dust are those hands to-day—dust are those hands ! . . .
Be still, sweet city bells, that ring up now !
(This athlete surely listens ; see, his hands
Pause, as they bind the fillet to his brow.)

Be still, bells of the churches ! for you rang,
Years gone, this pagan beauty from the land,
And from the people's minds—that now they look
Upon it—and no longer understand. . . .

(3)

What is this rustling thro' the fallen leaves ?
Satyr or nymph or faun—say who it is !
Joy : thro' the cypresses ! Joy : thro' the leaves !
His lips held up together for a kiss !

You've found me, Joy, at last : you've found me, Joy !
And just the place for meeting—after your mind !
Let's laugh the way we know, at Sorrow, at Death ;
Long, long I've waited—I thought you'd never find !

Kiss me again, and let me hold you close :
These arms of mine your tender prison-bars :
While Night comes with her sickle-moon and tries,
In vain, to reap the harvest of the stars.

VERNON KNOWLES.

SWIFT AND STELLA.

[*The mystery of the secret which bound together Dean Swift and Esther Johnson, and yet kept them cruelly apart, has caused endless conjecture since their tragedy occurred. Why did not they marry? They loved each other passionately—that is certain. Then why did they suffer their long agony and die unwedded?*

The theory given expression to in the play which follows was broached and elaborated in the 'Gentleman's Magazine' in 1757. It cannot be proved, and, undoubtedly, material difficulties would have to be overcome before the story could be accepted; but it does supply a reasonable explanation of the great cause which kept apart and ruined the lives of two of the world's outstanding lovers; and it is permissible to imagine the scene of the final meeting of Swift and Stella and its fatal revelation as I have ventured to do. 'Stella' unquestionably was the natural daughter of Sir William Temple; but as to the rest of it . . . Except for the assumption which brings the climax I have taken no liberties with persons or circumstances.—C. E. L.]

SCENE: The Library of the Deanery of St. Patrick's in Dublin in the early spring of 1723. A large room dim with candle-light. The furniture is of mahogany, and heavy. The windows are curtained, the carpets and the curtains being of a faded claret-colour. Portraits of ecclesiastics in robes and surplices hang on the walls. A wood fire gleams and flickers in a large open fireplace. The room imparts a sense of solid comfort; and yet it is not a happy room—for too long has it been a place of brooding thought and melancholy.

Jonathan Swift enters from a door at the back and stands awhile snuffing a candle on his writing-table. He is fifty-five years of age; well built. He walks with dignity, bearing the stateliness of a fine mind and a sense of high distinction. His features are boldly marked; the eyebrows prominent; the eyes have power, the nose is large and well-formed, slightly aquiline, the mouth and chin have firmness, yet is the face overcast with doubt and disappointment.

The Dean is robed in a black cassock and wears a bob-wig. His shoes have steel buckles.

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begins to write with a very long quill pen. With a sigh he puts down the pen.

SWIFT (*calling*). Brennan! (*A pause.*) Richard! Brennan!
(*After a few moments enter the man-servant. He stands in the doorway.*)

BRENNAN. Your reverence.

SWIFT. You Irish—you are always either over-fast or over-slow. It explains everything.

BRENNAN. I was at the door, your reverence.

SWIFT. I am expecting the ladies——

BRENNAN. They have come, your reverence. Mistress Johnson——

SWIFT. Hush! I wish no names mentioned without necessity. Even here! Ask her to come in.

BRENNAN. And Mistress Dingley?

SWIFT. She can remain with the housekeeper.

BRENNAN. I will tell Mrs. Ridgway. But they are not friends. They——

SWIFT (*angrily*). She can remain with the housekeeper—with Mrs. Ridgway. (*Exit Brennan.*)

(*The Dean rises from the table and walks to the fireplace. He puts on a log, then stands in thought, with his back to the fire waiting. Enter Stella.*)

Esther Johnson is on this day forty-two, and still a beautiful woman. Her hair is raven-black. Her face has a sweet expression, as though the discipline of waiting on hopes which never come has tried her without bringing embitterment. She tends to buxomness and is very simply dressed. She goes to the Dean who takes her hand and holds it. His expression, at the sight of her, has softened wonderfully.)

SWIFT. Stella! Stella! Before you come to me I dread—I dread; and then—having come, you bring dear happiness.

STELLA. And I—before I come I feel such happiness; and when I am with you——

SWIFT. Not dread, my Stella!

STELLA. No, not dread; but assuredly fear.

SWIFT. Fear of me?

STELLA. Nay, dear sir, dear Jonathan! Your presence holds such strength, your thoughts have often such fierceness——

SWIFT. But never over you.

STELLA. No, to me you have always been the kindest of friends; but that bitter world, that cruel world——

SWIFT (*fiercely*). Of Yahoos and mannikins !

STELLA. Yes, that is how it is. With me alone, as in those old days at Moor Park, you are the gentlest and most gallant of Deans, the dearest of play-fellows, with a young heart and the laughter of kindness——

SWIFT. And then I remember the mannikins—Boulter and Walpole and the others, the placemen and eaters of pensions, the slaves and parasites who feed upon the hearts of the poor.

STELLA. Nay, let us forget them, or I shall be sorry that I came.

SWIFT. That shall not be. Sit, my sweet. Sit in that chair, where I often think of you as sitting ; and in my darkness and my loneliness it brings the dew of kindness to my soul.

[(*Stella sits in an armchair to the right of the fireplace.*)]

STELLA. But why ?

SWIFT. You spoke of Moor Park.

STELLA. And often I think of those old days when you were my tutor there—I a child of eight, and you a stripling of twenty-one.

SWIFT. What possibilities were quickening when I was twenty-one ! Faith, they spoiled a fine gentleman !

STELLA. And then, after you were away—you came back and I was fifteen. Do you remember the summer-house and the trim walks and tulip-beds ?

SWIFT. And the garden where the king taught me how to cut asparagus ? If that had been the beginning and the sum of my association with the State and its government, I——

STELLA. Nay, my dear sir ! Let us forget the angers and remember the sweetness. When you and I were young.

SWIFT. Stella, Stella ! You have a heart of roses—of roses without their stings, their thorns. You never were a politician, my love !

STELLA. Never with you ; and but little by myself. They are so—unimportant. They strut and they bargain, they backbite and they snigger, they make speeches and speeches and speeches in an endless worry of very little ; and still the sun rises and sets, and the stars shine and fade, and the moon waxes and wanes and waxes again.

SWIFT. Good, Stella ! I wish I had thought of that in Lilliput.

STELLA. Let us even forget Lilliput. Your Gulliver, he frightens me. We were remembering Moor Park.

SWIFT. You think that Moor Park soothes me ? It brings no comfort to my heart and soul, I promise you.

STELLA. Say not so, dear master. For Moor Park brought to me my dearest happiness.

SWIFT. Sir William—

STELLA. Not Sir William Temple! No, nor of his sister, the angry and noisy, and oh, so tempestuous—Lady Giffard.

SWIFT. Ha, Madam Termagant! My Dorinda!

STELLA. No, and not of her. But of you, the trembling tutor with his soaring ambitions and his wounded pride.

SWIFT. Not of that, Stella. For what—what has it come to?

STELLA. This! The Deanery of St. Patrick's.

SWIFT. My dear—this! If you but knew! The pride of my intentions— This—this is nothing. I have broken my heart following a dream which at the touch turned to feathers. A mitre I saw, shining in the clouds and I strove for it; and not a mitre only, but power—the power of moving men, of controlling princes, of winning causes, of establishing the Church and the Kingdom on sounder and deeper foundations, and all—all—has fallen to wilderness, and waste, and words. I can say this to you; but let us not speak of it. Let us rather speak, as you have said, of those simpler hours of the early days when I was the despised poor secretary, and had for pupil the little maid with her blue eyes and raven hair—hair and eyes which make no surrender to the cruelties of Time. She lives before me still and has brought pain and comfort to my tortured heart in this Irish banishment.

(He stops, and for a moment hides his face in his hands, while Stella looks at him with the tenderest sympathy.)

SWIFT. Stella, a tragedy has happened since we met. *(Stella remains silent.)* Stella, you do not speak; but I tell you that a tragedy has happened, or will happen. Death is flying on his speediest wings to bring the only comfort to a wounded—a broken—heart—the wounded heart of—a fool.

STELLA. Nay! Jonathan!

SWIFT. Vanessa!

STELLA. Oh, must we speak of it? Why do you always search for pain, as if pain were your comfort? Why do you further torture that always tortured soul?

SWIFT. It is the result of life, Stella. Life without stress and agony would be impossible to me. Always I have suffered—nay, always I have fought against anguish of heart and body, enduring the patronage and pity of lesser people. Ha! From the beginning, even from the beginning, men, whom with these present powers

I could have crushed, ordered me here and there with their insolence, assisted me, insulted me, made me eat the bitter ashes of a base dependence.

STELLA. But that is past—and long past. It was a dream that is dead.

SWIFT. Not dead and no dream ; for its wounds—they bleed even in these hours. In my loneliness, as voices from the dead, as the voices of tempters whispering from a poisoned darkness, I hear again the old words of a contemptuous patronage, the stupid counsels of fools who knew not whom they were pleased to persecute with their inexpensive kindness and their assumptions of an importance they could not possess. Had they but seen the power of him they hurt with their smallness and vanities, they would have shrunk to the shadows and passed into the night with their hearts abashed. But they had not true knowledge or true pride.

STELLA. Always it was you who had the pride. The pity of it !

SWIFT. Yes, pride has been my strength and the cause of these weaknesses. This pride—it told me I was great and promised me the rewards of greatness ; and this pride—it raised against me bars of iron and hatred, opposition and indifference, so that I could not pass to where I had purposed to go. The little men, they baffled me.

STELLA (*slowly*). I see now—

SWIFT. Whom do you see ? Can it be—Vanessa ?

STELLA. Dear sir—forget that name. No, what you have said—it brings thoughts to me—memories—I would willingly forget.

SWIFT (*gently*). What do you see then, little one ?

STELLA. The hopelessness that came into your eyes when our great Sir William gave you his pens to cut and sent you on the mean errands that you must go, with your rusty coat and your worn shoes.

SWIFT. Stella, had those childish eyes such vision ?

STELLA. They saw that, Jonathan.

SWIFT. And did he ?—Sir William Temple ? Did he ever see—that ?

STELLA. I cannot think so. He had not affection.

SWIFT. I, too, cannot think so. He ! No ! The proud fortunate are blind to the humble about them. Sir William Temple and that angry, over-ruling widow, his sister, they knew humanity as common, but themselves as uncommon.

STELLA. Nay, dear sir !

SWIFT. It is so, Stella. The Giffard was only a hearthside fury, even her loudest angers could not hurt ; but he, with his airs, his

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grandeurs and his learning, his authority as ambassador and traveller and statesman, he wounded often without knowing how poisonous a gracious condescension could be. It rankles still in the evil hours.

STELLA. I remember only kindness from Sir William Temple.

SWIFT. Yes, kind he would be, and glad I am that he was always kind with you ; but with me—why, why do we speak of these things ? Let us forget him and Moor Park and its anguish—

(He turns from her abruptly to stare moodily at the fire. She rises as if she would go to comfort him ; but she sits again as he turns.)

SWIFT. I am sorry, Stella. I despise my weakness, for I know—often I have done so—I know that I can bear these pricks and pains. They are nothing.

STELLA. We will not speak of them. I do not wish you to suffer pricks and pains.

SWIFT. Then I must not think or speak of anything in the past.

STELLA. Is it as hopeless as that ?

SWIFT. Life, Stella, life ! What is it, but one pain, grief and anguish ? We are born—to die, and before death brings his blessed relief we must suffer illnesses, humiliations, disappointments, shames, the patronage of puny men, the annoyance of the wealthy, the contempt of the strong. When the darkness comes and the sleeplessness, when I am alone and the clouds gather about me, the question comes—the question always comes—why was I born, and no sweet answer visits my reason to comfort me.

STELLA *(rising)*. I must go. I work upon your feelings. I do you harm.

SWIFT. Nay, sweet, you are all the angel I have known in this world.

STELLA. Jonathan !

SWIFT. All of angel, my little one, sweet. And we must speak of—Vanhomrigh.

(Stella raises a hand of appeal, but says nothing, being aware of the unrestrainable impulse that possesses him.)

SWIFT. Yes, it is of no use coming and going in this manner, not touching the one dreadful subject that is close at the hearts of both of us. Hester Vanhomrigh, she wrote to you.

STELLA. And on the impulse I sent her letter to you. It is the worst madness always to follow such impulses ; but what could a woman do, when asked such a question in that sudden manner ?

SWIFT. Or a man. I followed an impulse also.

STELLA. Jonathan ?

SWIFT. When you sent that letter to me, and it was brought to me at that table, I read it, and afterwards I saw—nothing. My sight went dim with passion. That woman—Vanessa I had called her—

STELLA. Vanessa, and you were her Cadenus !

SWIFT. Ah ! These thoughts !—and those follies ! I have hated greatly, Stella. If with one word I might have broken a life, have blasted her body and soul—that woman who offered me her love and in her folly thought that she had won mine—Vanessa would have been a clod, a shadow, nothing. I hated her—hating her the more because of my love for you, which began at the very beginning—

STELLA. Jonathan !

SWIFT. When you were that tiny thing with your trusting eyes and the little hands which seemed to cling to my heart, bringing to it all the comfort I could find. Yes, in the loneliness of that large house with its many people, and the great Sir William with his head among the vanities, though the while—I know—he was as weak as the worst of us—with all the gilded formalities of his position being just as true a piece of common clay as the country-lout with the hedge-maid. Ah, the unconscious hypocrisies !

STELLA. But what did you do with Mistress Vanhomrigh ?

SWIFT. I called for Brennan, he brought my horse. I carried her letter back to her at Marlay Abbey. In my anger—now I can see it—I rode those miles through the dark and the mire with never the lamp of a single star to brighten my wrath and misery, and saw nothing of the way. I sprang up the stairs, passed her woman, and into the room. She was there, standing ; I can see her face yellow with fear—her eyes—waiting. I flung the letter on to the table—

STELLA. Oh !

SWIFT. She shrank at the sight of it as though struck in the heart. I thought she would fall. I saw death in her eyes. I went.

STELLA. She will die.

SWIFT. She is dead to me.

STELLA. And she loved you, as I have loved you. Would you do that to me ?

SWIFT. I would not.

STELLA. Did you love her, Jonathan ?

SWIFT. I did not.

STELLA. And why were you so wroth with her ?

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SWIFT. That question—she should not have asked it of you.

STELLA. A woman's love! There is nothing can encompass a woman's love. She will surely die and will be happier dead.

SWIFT. So shall we all! What is life but a sepulchre of which we are conscious?

STELLA. No, for love with its warmth and its hopes, it does bring gladness even though it ends as Hester Vanhomrigh's love has ended. Life is a garden, and no graveyard, rich with sunlight and flowers. Our love—my love for you—has made me happy. Yet how much happier this life should have been!

SWIFT. Ah, Stella!

STELLA. Dear sir, I answered that letter, and that question.

SWIFT. Well?

STELLA. She asked if we were married—you and I.

SWIFT. And what did you say?

STELLA. I said—Yes.

SWIFT. It was not true, Esther Johnson.

STELLA. I am a woman, Jonathan, and I have loved you since you were a tutor and I was that child. I believe truly that even as that child I gave you the richness and the fullness of a womanly love. It came to me as a revelation must come, it was the dearest thing I had to give. My heart was heavy with its gladness. Had you bade me, I would have followed you at any time wherever you cared to go—as your servant on bare feet, doing the poorest work, drudgery, for the love of you. You did not marry me, or say a word about marriage to me; though I hoped and waited for the word until hope must die and hope did die; for I knew that, if you did not wish for me to be your wife in my youth and freshness, you could not need me when I was faded with age. (*Swift denies this with a shake of the head.*) But always have I held to you faithfully; always in my thoughts and my heart I have been your wife. I was married to you by the vows of my soul and it was to me the holiest sacrament.

SWIFT. Stella, God knows—God knows I have loved you, too—and that in the temple of my soul you also have been enshrined—its one mistress, my only possible bride and wife; for from those earliest years I have loved you always, and only you. At the beginning it was as a brother's love, calm and protective; but very soon afterwards it was a passion deeper, warmer, exalted—

STELLA. Then why, Jonathan?

SWIFT. Let us not speak of it! And now that we have said so

much let us forget all of it. It was that poor Essie Vanhomrigh, her folly in writing to you and all that has come of it, which broke the restraints. It should have remained a secret buried in the silence of our hearts.

STELLA. No.

SWIFT. It must be so, Stella.

STELLA. No. Tell me why you did not marry me!

SWIFT. Bury these thoughts, my dear.

STELLA. Not now, Jonathan. (*Rising*) The truth must be told. You must have had some reason for not making me your wife, if you loved me as you say you do and did.

SWIFT. And shall, Stella, while I have a lucent thought. The last sweet thought I shall have in this dark world—I know it will be of you.

STELLA. Then tell me why, husband!

SWIFT. The secret is not mine.

STELLA. I must share it.

SWIFT. No.

STELLA. As you have loved me, Jonathan! Why did you not marry me, although you knew that I loved you and was waiting all those years?

SWIFT. The secret—I have said that it is not mine.

STELLA. It is my right. That secret—whatever it is—has made my life a ruin, a wilderness, a disaster. I claim the right to know it, whatever it is. You cannot pain me any more, Jonathan.

SWIFT. Pain you, Stella! Truly—I promise you—it cannot help you for me to tell.

STELLA. Will you frustrate and refuse my last wish of you?

SWIFT. No. You shall know. I who have been frustrated so often, so bitterly—yes, you shall know. Your father and my father were the same—we were natural children. Sir William Temple—

STELLA. He! It was he?

SWIFT. Sir William Temple was the father of you and of my sister!

(*Stella turns away. Her face is pale. She trembles with agitation.*)

STELLA. No! No!

SWIFT. Farewell, my little love. Farewell, my sweet, my Esther, my Stella, my darling!

STELLA. I must go.

SWIFT. Yes, you must go. Always you must go. Always

frustrated—always. Ambitions, hopes, and love! How gladly I would have kept you if—if——

STELLA. It explains everything. I have thought and wondered through hours upon hours of night and day, asking—Why? I knew you cared for me. You have been so gentle with me—you, who have fought so hard and hated, hated and fought with a fierceness which in itself was sometimes terrible enough to kill. Your care of my—reputation, meeting me so seldom out of the presence of another—those evening visits, your comings and going in the moonless dark, and not a word or gesture or caress which might have spelt for me my dearest happiness. I wish I had known before that terrible truth.

SWIFT. It was not my secret.

STELLA. Farewell, brother. Dingley will wonder why I have been so long. That poor Vanessa! I can grieve with her now. This love is a terrible thing——

SWIFT. It must not break you, Stella!

STELLA. I cannot say. The last of my hopes in life has been stolen away, except that in death it may live again. Brother, good-bye.

(Exit Stella.)

(For a moment as the door closes behind her Swift hides his face in his hands. Then he walks to and fro, slowly, and gradually breaks into speech.)

SWIFT. Darkness! Darkness! Darkness! . . . (then with an anger of passion) Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, there is a man child conceived. Let that day be darkness; let not God regard it from above, neither let the light shine upon it. Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it; let a cloud dwell upon it, let the blackness of the day terrify. As for that night let darkness seize . . .

(Curtain.)

C. E. LAWRENCE.

THE STUDENT AND THE TOWER.

BY MARMADUKE PICKTHALL.

'Be proud that you are Asiatics—proud that you are Indians! Leave your English colleges, which are the training-places of slaves! Throw off your foreign clothes, which are the badge of servitude! Restore the honour of our country! Be yourselves!'

Up among the branches of a flowering tree, whose blossoms rose like flame against the hot blue sky, Rangildas with seven other manly students clung and gazed upon the scene below, intently listening. The low wall and high railings of the college compound formed a narrow line between the crowd within the gates and that without, both pressing to the railings, except at one point where a group of white-capped, white-robed men stood in a rough half circle round a chair on which the speaker perched, keeping the crowd away from it. The chair was close against the wall. The speaker, standing on it, grasped a railing with one hand, the better, as it seemed, to hurl the music of his voice at those within. These were all students of the college, most of them in English dress under a variety of headgear—hats, solar topees, scarlet fezes, round black caps, and even turbans. The faces, all uptilted at a given angle, were intent upon the speaker's lips. From Rangildas's point of vantage in the tree the view was all of faces—Indian faces of an earnest, set expression, with lips parted, enlivened by the eager gleam of teeth and eyeballs. Three of the flame-flower trees above the wall bore each its wad of students in the branches. The noise of tram-bells in the distance, the murmur of the city's traffic, and the shrieking of some crows which circled overhead were the only sounds competing with the speaker's sing-song voice, except when the recurrence of a name at intervals evoked from both sides of the wall a shout: 'Success to Mahatma Gandhi.' When that happened the sea of faces effervesced and flashed a moment, then relapsed to receptivity. Right in the background, in deep shadow, under the arches of the college front, the principal and most of the professors watched the scene with disapproval, helpless and quite forgotten for the time.

'Our object is to make the Government do right,' the speaker cried. 'While we are servile we can never do it. To merit freedom we must first be free—free from the foreign yoke on our

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intelligence. . . . Selfish ambition is a vice and not a virtue. It has been inculcated for our ruin, just to keep us slaves. The way to freedom lies through sacrifice and service. . . . Discard your foreign clothes! Forsake your colleges! Apply the knowledge you acquired for selfish ends to human purposes! Go forth as teachers into our great country! Dispel the ignorance which is the base of tyranny! . . . I say again: be proud that you are Indians!'

A hat was thrown from somewhere in the crowd of students. It struck the railings where the speaker stood. It was followed by a score of foreign head-dresses with collars, coats, and ties—whatever could be pulled off easily. Loud shouts arose. Rangildas threw down his cap, which was of foreign manufacture, and after it the cap of one who perched beside him in the tree. The cast-off clothing was collected in a heap and set on fire with matches and a newspaper. And then another speaker rose and gave a spirited address. One thing he said made all the students smile:

'You sit for an examination, all of you, upon a certain day, regardless of your state of health and state of mind. The questions you are asked are all haphazard. Then if you pass you are successful, if you fail you are deficient, not for that moment only, but for life! And you accept the verdict! What incredible docility! Why, if, instead of going through the written papers, the examiners were to take them to the top of the Rajabhai Tower and throw them to the winds, preferring those which fell within a certain radius—that would be as fair a test of real ability as that to which you are prepared to trust your hopes in life!'

Rangildas saw the papers flying from the tower, and all the students running to and fro to catch them. He saw some lodged upon a Gothic pinnacle, some lying on the Secretariat roof, some down in Esplanade Road and even Medows Street, and none at all upon the Oval, where they should be. The little allegory pleased him more than all the exhortations of the other speakers, because it gave a picture to his memory. He chuckled, seeing foolscap paper floating in the air and silly, anxious students chasing after it.

A resolution was proposed, condemning foreign education. It was passed unanimously, with enthusiasm, by the students. The group of white-clad missionaries then moved off, the crowd outside the college bounds dispersed, and Rangildas descended from among the flame-flowers.

Inside the railings the crowd lingered. The students, grinning at each other's odd appearance, half unclothed, discussed the

consequences of the resolution. Some were for going out immediately and taking service with Mahatma Gandhi, but most of them considered they must first consult their parents. In the moment of excitement it seemed certain that every Indian parent would applaud their aim. A few intrepid and impatient souls went to the college straightway to affront the principal; and one of these, a Mussulman named Ali, took fond leave of Rangildas, with whom he had been long on friendly terms. He referred with warm appreciation to the allegory of the papers and the tower, exclaiming:

'It is, as he said, a fraud. Thank God our eyes are opened to the fraud of it. Now I would sooner dig the ground or hammer iron than live in bondage to the men who hate our country.'

Rangildas approved of the sentiment, which was his own, although expressed more strongly, as was to be expected from a Mussulman. The crowd at length dispersed and Rangildas went home, forgetful of the fact that he was hatless. He told his wife about the meeting and how he had become a Non-Co-operator since she last beheld him. The little lady smiled her acquiescence, as she always did on things which did not come within a woman's province; but she made him write and tell his father that same evening.

For three days he kept holiday with patriotic zeal. On the fourth day came his father's answer, a decided negative. Rangildas shrugged his shoulders and went back to college in profound dejection. It raised his spirits somewhat to encounter numbers of his fellow-students in the same frustrated plight. The heroic Ali and his comrades might upbraid them, and even make them feel exceedingly ashamed. But those upbraidings had no dreadful consequences such as would undoubtedly attend a father's wrath. So they pursued their foreign education tamely.

Rangildas was no enthusiast for study of whatever kind. His nature was against enforced attention. The son of a small potentate in Kathiawad, already well endowed, well nourished, comfortably married, and without ambition, he had not much in common with the run of students, most of them half-starved, to whom the Bombay University degree appeared a crown of glory. To Rangildas it seemed at best a trifle, and at worst a fraud. Its worth he estimated from advertisements appearing in the newspapers, which offered posts of a hundred rupees a month—'To M.A.'s Only.' But his father, who knew nothing of the university, thought well of it, and as a good Hindu he had to please his father.

He lived comfortably in a Hindu boarding-house at Chowpathy

in three rooms, two of them appropriated to his wife and her attendants. He loved his wife, and, if no special pastime offered in the evening, was well content to sit and talk with her upon their balcony, looking across the bay to the Colaba lights. They went to Gujerati and Marathi plays, to picture-palaces and concerts. He did not work outside the college; but he was conscious of a measure of superiority, an easy mastery of all essentials, which made him certain of success in his examination when it came to that. He felt compassion for emaciated and fanatic youths, who looked upon it as the goal of earthly life.

There was one thing that impressed him in the university, and that was the tower—the Rajabhai Tower, which could be seen from everywhere. It and the exotic building out of which it sprang performed a special function of realisation. But for them, the thing they stood for would have been invisible; for the University of Bombay is only an examining body to test the output of all sorts of colleges throughout the presidency. Without the tower it would have been no more than an imaginary standard of imperfection.

The tower stood for Government education in the mind of Rangildas, and also for his duty to his father who, in the pleasant wilds of Kathiawad, still believed that English education acted like a charm. It had long ago become personified in his imagination. The clock in the great cube beneath its pinnacle was like a face which often, now that Rangildas had learnt the truth about it, wore a waggish look. It grinned high up above the ring of palm-trees round the Oval, thinking of all the dupes that it had made in India. Perception of its roguery did not impair his veneration for the tower, nor cause him really to deplore his father's obstinacy. In the Hindu pantheon there are malicious deities which have to be propitiated like the others. These have their favourites among mortals, their affinities; and Rangildas was conscious of an understanding with the tower, due to his knowledge that it stood for a delusion.

He loved to sit beneath it in the shady garden, disordered at that time by building operations. Its summit seemed to pierce the hot, pale sky. It stood a head and shoulders above everything. He did not know that it was neo-Gothic of a shocking type, a standing insult to the genius of his native land. For him, the tower was an outstanding personality which typified a certain phase of life. As such he worshipped it.

One day, while he sat thus in contemplation of the tower, Ali the Non-Co-operator came and joined him, having spied him from

the street. No Mussulman could understand his feeling for the tower; but since the tower was on his mind, he spoke about it, reminding Ali of the parable which they had heard concerning it.

'There is much truth in it,' was Ali's comment. 'They say—you must have heard it—that the examination papers were all lost on one occasion by an Englishman, who had his room up in the tower. They relate that, when he could not find the papers, he procured a list of candidates, wrote down their names on little bits of paper, put them in his hat, and then drew lots for the result. His servant told the story, it is said. However that may be, it is a fact beyond dispute that papers of such value to the students have been sometimes lost. It is certain, also, that success does not invariably wait on merit in this university.'

'Then it may be,' said Rangildas, 'that I, who take life easy, have as good a chance as one whose eyes are blind from nights of study.'

'That is the case,' replied the Non-Co-operator, 'for the candidate's performance has often no perceptible effect on the announced result.'

'I hope I shall succeed,' said Rangildas.

Just then a turbaned man, unknown to either of them, approached and asked them to depart, because the garden was not public. Ali whispered that it was a professor or else an agent of the C.I.D. The Non-Co-operator's shirt of Indian homespun and the Gandhi cap aroused the zeal of every Government official.

Next day, while at a lecture in his college, Rangildas was summoned by the principal, who asked him if he was an enemy to law and order. When he answered 'No,' the principal advised him to avoid the very odour of sedition, and above all to abjure the company of Non-Co-operators. Rangildas was disconcerted and alarmed.

He carried all his troubles to his wife, Her-devi. The little calm-eyed lady soothed him with her sympathy, letting him talk till he was quite unburdened, hearing all he chose to tell her as a tale of mystic meaning on which she commented accordingly to her modest lights. For her all life was duty, and all duty was illumined by the lamp of love she carried. Her first of duties was to smooth her husband's brow.

'The Non-Co-operators have denounced the Government,' Her-devi said, 'and the University is a Government institution. If you show yourself to be a friend of Non-Co-operators they will think you are their enemy and make you fail in your examination. It is natural.'

Her-devi had acquired her husband's feeling for the tower, and as examination-time drew near she even did *pūja* to it, as if it had the power to grant success.

The days of the examination were extremely hot. The atmosphere within the room was quite oppressive. Bugs dwelling in the desks came out and bit the candidates, who gasped and fidgeted. As one of them remarked, it was like Hell. The professors overlooking the proceedings wore satanic looks, seeming to gloat on the discomfort of the victims. On each day Rangildas was first to go. Yet he considered he had not done ill, since he had answered every question plainly.

His wife received him as a hero from the field of glory. At night they went together to the pictures; and when the ordeal was over they collected their belongings and went to Grant Road Station in two gharries, in good time to catch the Kathiawad express. Already they were picturing their glad reception, and after that the frenzy of rejoicing when the news arrived. The whole population would rejoice at the success of Rangildas.

Bombay and all its interests had long been left behind when Rangildas sat out one day on a veranda of his father's house, looking down an ancient flight of broad stone steps on to a village street, beyond which, on a hill, appeared the rock-like apex of a temple rising from a grove of trees. A lizard basked upon the edge of the veranda. Doves were cooing on the roofs. Voices of human kind and dogs and poultry rose up from the village, together with the clinking from the blacksmith's forge and tinkling of the bells of bullocks bearing water to the houses. Rangildas, in loose robes and a resplendent turban, reclined upon a mattress in the shade. A servant, sitting cross-legged at his head, flourished a palm-leaf fan for his refreshment. At a seemly distance from him, Her-devi, in a pale green sari trimmed with silver, sat upon another mattress, fanned in like manner by a girl attendant. Upon a tray between them on the ground were fruits and sweetmeats and a jar of water; and before the tray, partaking of its dainties tirelessly, sat Ali the Non-Co-operator, who, wandering through Kathiawad on some mission, had come by chance upon the dwelling of his former class-fellow. Ali was lean and weather-worn, and very hungry; but he had acquired the look of manhood and authority. His pleasure in good food and comradeship was unconcealed. Her-devi used him with the kind of reverence she would have paid to any saintly *pigri* or *fakir*. She liked to see him eating with avidity, believing it would bring a blessing on the house.

'I know now that I have a soul to call my own,' said Ali, speaking to them of his way of life. 'How can one know it who is never solitary, who never communes with himself, nor tests his power of endurance?'

'Your way is better, we all know,' replied Her-devi, to relieve her husband, who, she fancied, might feel shamed by this remark. 'But it is for saints; for chosen spirits, not for everybody.'

'We Mussulmans think otherwise,' said Ali. 'And your own Mahatma——'

'He is a saint,' the lady murmured sweetly. 'And many thousands of Hindus are saints for love of him!'

Just then a messenger came up the steps—a man in khaki tunic, with a belt and badge, bearing in his hand a staff. It was the postman. Having laid a packet reverently at the feet of Rangildas, he saluted everyone and went away again.

Rangildas undid the packet. It contained a newspaper.

'I praise God for the taste of mangoes,' proclaimed Ali in a manner of soliloquy.

'What! Are they finished?' cried Her-devi, and forthwith sent her maid to fetch some more of them.

'Think me not greedy, lady,' said the Non-Co-operator. 'But think how even you yourself would feel if, having been bred up in affluence, you were constrained to live for months upon a modicum of rice and lentils—nothing else except what here or there some charitable soul may furnish. In many places they give nothing to me for the fear of Government, which means, of course, the sub-inspector of police. . . . May God reward you!' he concluded as the servant heaped fresh mangoes on the tray.

A strange ejaculation came from Rangildas. They all looked round. Ali was frozen in the act of peeling a mango with his teeth.

'What is it?' he inquired.

Rangildas groaned. 'It is the result of the examination,' he said miserably.

'And you have failed?' said Ali tenderly. 'Be not so sad, my friend. The matter is not serious for one like you, who have not to procure a livelihood. To me the system now appears incredibly absurd. Have you forgotten that instructive parable about the papers and the tower?'

'I have forgotten nothing,' answered Rangildas. 'But my concern is in the present—how to face my father!'

Rangildas had sat up and was staring straight before him with round eyes of fear. He saw a clock-face grinning at him over

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palm-trees. Her-devi, who perceived the magnitude of the disaster, grew tearful and exclaimed : ' Alas ! Alas ! '

Ali then craved permission to depart. Calling down blessings on them for their hospitality, he begged them not to take the news so much to heart. ' Your father will be angry, but he will recover presently. In your place, I would tell my mother first.'

' Ah, that is good advice ! ' exclaimed Her-devi bravely. ' Our mother will convey the tidings more acceptably.'

' How can I tell anybody,' moaned Rangildas, ' when I have always spoken of success as sure ? '

' I will tell her when we sit together in the evening. Give me that wicked paper ! ' said Her-devi.

That evening there was grief among the women of that princely house—loud lamentation mixed with curses on the university, and in the morning Rangildas was summoned to his father's presence, not in an informal manner, but officially, at a moment when he sat in state with all his counsellors. Holding in his hand the sinful newspaper, the chieftain thus apostrophised his son :

' This copy of a Bombay journal, which has been submitted to me, contains the list of those successful in the university examination for which you sat, my son. I do not find your name upon the list. Therefore you have missed the mark you aimed at. Yet you assured me that it was impossible you should have missed.'

' Alas ! ' the counsellors exclaimed, wagging their turbans lamentably. ' Missed the mark ! Missed the mark ! Too bad ! Too bad ! '

' Now how is that, my son ? You are not lacking in intelligence. Have you been idle when you always wrote that you were deep in study ? '

' No doubt there is some satisfying explanation ! ' said the counsellors.

Rangildas stood before them, a dejected, rather sullen figure. He kept silence till his father urged : ' Explain the matter ! ' when he muttered hoarsely :

' It is all a fraud.'

' What do you mean ? A fraud ! How can it be ? '

' A fraud ! ' the counsellors exclaimed in wondering tones.

' The judgment on the papers seems a fraud to me, my father, though, because it is an old-established custom of the English, no one dares to say so.' His hesitating tones gave place to indignation. ' The result is not decided by the contents of the papers.'

' How then ? ' his father asked. ' Is it by weight they judge

them ? Or is a gift to the examiners required to win their favour ? I had thought of that, but the college principal informed me that it was forbidden.'

'A grievous pity !' sighed the counsellors. 'Perhaps he lied !'

'It is by chance that they decide,' said Rangildas. 'What would you say of this, my father, for a fair decision : The papers are all taken to the top of the tower, while all their owners wait upon the ground below——'

'And then the papers are thrown down ?' put in a counsellor excitedly.

'They are thrown down, but not as you suppose,' said Rangildas with sudden hope, perceiving the extent of their credulity. 'The papers are then thrown down one by one, and as each paper is committed to the winds the owner's name is called. He has to run to catch it. If he fails to catch it, all his erudition counts for nothing ; he has failed. Would you call that a fair decision, O my father ?'

'No, that I should not,' was the answer, 'considering the aim was learning, not agility.'

'Not fair, by any means,' agreed the counsellors.

'The Bombay method is like that,' said Rangildas. 'The English made the rule. We must obey it.'

'Then are the English mad ?' his father cried in pure amazement.

'Most evidently mad !' declared the counsellors.

'Not mad, perhaps, but to our mind eccentric,' Rangildas amended. 'They rank athletic prowess above learning.'

'So I have heard.' His father nodded gravely, so did the counsellors ; and Rangildas perceived that he had scored a weighty point.

'But how could you imagine that you had succeeded when you knew of the strange rule and knew that you had failed to catch your papers ?' asked the chieftain shrewdly, suspicion reappearing in his eyes.

Rangildas assumed an air of childlike candour to reply : 'No student can catch all his papers. Some get lodged upon the roofs, or fall in distant places, inaccessible to us. When one catches a good number, it is thought sufficient.'

The counsellors glanced at one another, saying : 'That is reasonable.'

The chieftain then concluded :

'Well, my son, I suppose I must forgive your failure, since it seems to be a matter of pure chance, and not of skill, as I was given

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to suppose. You have told me something that I never knew before, nor even guessed, in all my life on earth. A marvel, nothing less! Can such things be?’

‘We live and learn! All things are possible!’ exclaimed the counsellors.

‘If that is English education, it seems less desirable than I supposed. We can well do without it,’ said the chieftain as his son went out; and Rangildas deemed it only right to tell his father that it was an absolute necessity for those who sought position in the service of the Government.

‘That also,’ said his father, ‘we can do without.’

His incredible success in that encounter with his father—which Her-devi ascribed to certain superstitious rites she had performed for him—restored to Rangildas his peace of mind and pleasure in the easy palace life. He had no love of study for its own sake, nor wish to be confined again in English clothes. Occasionally the malicious tower appeared to his mind’s eye, seeming to suggest that it had not quite done with him; but he had lost all veneration for the structure, which he banished from his thoughts with execration. It typified the one discomfort in his lazy life—the apprehension that his barefaced lie might be discovered. His father quite believed the explanation he had given, so did the counsellors; and, more than that, regarding it as highly curious, they told it far and wide among the people, who, interested in everything concerning the chief’s family, received it eagerly, and talked about it. Rangildas felt that some day somebody was bound to hear it who knew the truth about the methods of the university. The wonder was that it went unimpugned so long.

It remained not only unimpugned, but cherished, till a certain day when a celebrated pleader from Bombay, touring in Kathiawad, came to the little State and called upon its ruler.

After the usual greetings on both sides, the visitor inquired concerning Rangildas, remarking: ‘I noticed that he failed in his examination. I was not surprised. He took things much too easy.’

The father of Rangildas replied a little stiffly:

‘My son did well in the examination. But when the real test came, the day was hot; he could not do his best at running to and fro to catch the papers. He missed some of them.’

‘What do you mean to tell me?’ cried the visitor in deep concern; and the story was repeated for his benefit.

‘But there is not a word of truth in it, I do assure your Highness!’

'Is my son, then, a liar?' asked the chieftain coldly.

'I would not go so far as that,' murmured the visitor. 'And it is a fact that the result of an examination is largely an affair of chance. The best men often fail. Perhaps he told the story as a kind of allegory.'

'My son would not deceive me,' said the chieftain with conviction; and with that he changed the subject of their conversation pointedly. But no sooner had the visitor departed than he dispatched messengers in haste to call his counsellors together, and, when they had assembled, sent a summons to his son.

'My son, I now am certain that all you said of your examination in my presence, and in the hearing of my council, was a lie. Why did you thus deceive me?' questioned the old man in tones which made the culprit tremble in his fancy slippers. Rangildas had often pictured such a scene as this. He knew that he must tell the truth at last and throw himself upon his father's mercy. But the presence of the counsellors at such a moment, the moment of his degradation, wounded him and made him dogged.

He said: 'I did but repeat a description of their methods which I heard from one who was himself a graduate, a man whose name is known throughout the land. He gave it just to show us plainly that all this English education is a farce, and worthless. Everyone knows that at the present day. Mahatma Gandhi says so openly.'

At mention of that name the chieftain raised his hands as if to ward off an approaching danger; the faces of the counsellors grew wild with horror.

'Name not Mahatma Gandhi, wretched boy! Is it not enough that you have failed in your examination through sheer idleness, that you must needs become infected with these new ideas which sever ties of kinship and bring unmerited disgrace on honoured houses?'

'Especially in Indian States,' subjoined the counsellors. 'The honourable Agent-General cannot bear them.'

Rangildas, amid his misery, perceived that they were really terrified. It gave him an advantage, and he used it desperately.

'Mahatma Gandhi is my leader,' he declared. 'Since my father will not trust my word, and is ashamed of me, I shall put on *khaki*, I shall join his following, and devote whatever may remain to me of life to striving for the liberation of our glorious country. I have a friend, a Mussulman named Ali. I shall go to him and lead the life of saints, the life of sacrifice. I start this night. Her-devi goes with me. I leave my father, mother—everyone!

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How can I live where I have been dishonoured?' He burst into tears.

'And I? What will become of me?' exclaimed his father wildly. 'They will not punish you, unhappy boy. Me they will punish—me, your father! I shall be thrown in prison and deprived of everything for having caused the birth of a seditious person. Such is the venom of the English rulers against one who is himself the best of living men, the glory and the pride of Kathiawad. Breathe not his name within my gates or I am ruined. If my son joins him, then I am indeed decapitated, for I have no face with which to meet the Agent-General or his minions. I thought you had outgrown that nonsense. Say that you will not go! Swear it this instant! Leave all this foolish talk and come to reason. Are you not happy here? Inform me, pray! Is there anything on earth you lack which I can give you?'

'Ah, how can I be happy when my father disbelieves my words, and thinks I failed in fair examination? Behold me shamed, dishonoured in my father's house!'

'Forget all that, my son: I spoke in haste. It was unquestionably an affair of luck—a fraud, as you described it. Mahatma says so, and he cannot lie. . . . Take money, travel with your bride, take other women, buy race-horses, do anything you like, but never, never again pronounce a word which they would call seditious in my hearing!'

'Come, cry a bargain!' cooed the counsellors. 'Truly the world-protector speaks divinely. No fairer offer has been made to youth.'

'I do not ask for anything at all,' sobbed Rangildas, 'except my father's love and confidence, without which I am nothing but an outcast, hateful to myself.'

'My love and confidence are yours, my son!'

'Well said! Well said, indeed!' exclaimed the counsellors.

Thereafter, in the women's quarters, there were wild rejoicings, lasting half the night, for Rangildas, the darling of the house, had overcome the machinations of an enemy. His little wife, when she had finished certain rites which she thought proper to perform on such a fortunate occasion, looked up at him and whispered: 'I am happy now. The evil which pursued us from Bombay is exorcised. The tower is harmless.'

'But still I failed in the examination,' murmured Rangildas.

A breath of dawn came through the open lattices. The temple bells were chiming sweetly in the sacred grove. She answered: 'That was an illusion. This is life.'

WILL ADDISON'S LOVE LETTERS—II.

BY C. A. FOWLER AND L. HUXLEY.

THE sixth letter is from Rose Wilson in answer to the long account of Will's escapade at Oxford, letter four. It runs all in a breath, and at the last, a trifle unintelligibly.

To Mr. Willm Addison

of Lincoln College
Oxford

North Allerton, July 22, 1763.

DEAR BILLY how greatly am I obliged to you for the Books you were so good as to send me ; please to accept my Thanks for them. I was thrown into great Confusion when I received them, for your papa was close behind me when y^e Lad brought them & I was afraid he wou'd have known the hand, but he knew that I had sent a parcel to Newcastle so he imagined that it was returned but I guest what it was, and to prevent this had sent down to Matthew Bells ; for your papa Let us see your letter Just before so I concluded there wou'd be some thing for us by the same hand, but behold it came by the Carriage Man which was very lucky for he woud have suspected it, if it had come the other way, I am glad I can be any ways serviceable to Billy Addy to use your own words I think you say in one of your pages that you will never credit your own Eyes for the future which Maxim if rightly applied might be of service to us all for our eyes often times deceive us when wee Judge by outward appearences only, I coud wish to Inculcate this upon your mind, for we are but too apt to cry out when our acquaintance do not prove what we expected them that our eyes have deceived us but I cannot help thinking but that it is our reason that is as much to blame, you will say that I Harrange on very prittely but I have done. I have often heard woman called a riddle but, now I find it quite revers'd, for you have really puzzled me when you call me Hypocrite and obliging allmost in the same line, which former, is a Character I detest so cannot apply it to myself, you Lords of the creation expect so much Homage payd you that it is not to be wonder'd at that you are so frequently disappoynted I woud advise you to be a little more humble in your oppinion of yourselves for it realy will not do in this Nation, I cannot say I was in the least sorry for your confinement after the Engagemnt you were in, for I do not doubt but you were the first

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Aggressors. I was in hopes you had laid this Porterly work aside and assumed more Manly Airs for I think in some of your former letters you told us that you was grown quite serious and grave, which we very much applauded you for, I am sorry I cannot send you my shade¹ as we have not yet begun to light candles but shu'd be glad to see some of your performances in the meantime, I can assure you that the letter you received from Matthew was writ by your Uncles orders and he was much displeased that you took so little notice of it, he was over the last week, he came on Tuesday and whent to Borrowby² and dined and came to drink tea at Thonton we happend to be there but could not prevail with him to stay all Night tho he had but Just escaped a very heavy shower and one threaten'd him in his return to Allerton which he got for we returnd the next Morning, and he spent the afternoon with us and seemed to regret that he did not accept of a bed there, he went home the same night but woud not get much rain for he just catched a fine gleam, we have had a continued scene of rainy weather along with thunder and Lightning which I am afraid will do much harm in the Country, your uncle journey—he told us, was upon your Brother Jackys account, but they did not come to an agreement then, for his Master woud not take him under thirty pounds which your uncle looked upon as an exorbitant thing as ten pounds is generally a Tanners fee, but I believe the truth was that he was very easy about taking him, but since have heard that your uncle left orders with your papa to treat with him for ten pounds a year, so if either of them shoud repent it woud not be so great a disappointment, which I believe Mask will agree to, but that is under the rose for Jacky, is not to know but that he is Bound apprintice, your papa has been but very badly lately and was but Just recovering when your uncle came, you must remember that he had a Complaint in his throat which broke, and was a very great relieff to him for he realy wasted very fast before, so that we apprehended the worst, but now he is quite stout again, if he woud but take care of himself we forgot to tell you that we never had the dance that was talked of when you left us, and what more I know not when we shall dance again at Allerton,³ but I do assure you I never was more able to dance then I am now for I am quite well and full of spirits considering the loss of our poor Billy⁴ which got himself worried soon after you left us you will wonder at me when I tell you that I even did not shed a tear for him as poor

¹ The 'shade' is the silhouette Will had asked for.

² Borrowby lies south-east of North Allerton, beyond the Cod Beck, and is barely two miles due east of Thornton le Moor. Will's descendants continued to own a farm there till a few years ago.

³ The families were all beginning to scatter, as the young people married.

⁴ This was probably one of the dogs which Will was always giving to his friends. Even the frugal old parson was fond of coursing and kept his greyhounds

Mrs Dent did for her parrot but I know it will be a great concern to you, your Uncle talks of going to York to see your sister pally, we had not you mensiond when we shall get to NewCastle cannot tell the weather is so unsettled yet but we purpose going the fore end of the next week if it shu'd take up which is our present and only Hinderance of not getting of before now which is all from your

ROSE WILSON.

Dr. Addison died in the September of this year. He last wrote to his son Will at Oxford, on August 26, 1763. At his death the house and practice were sold to Dr. Dent.

Ester's letter to Will Addison, at Oxford, was written on the same sheet as Rose's.

Well my Dear Nephew, wont you join me in thinking that both you & I, are much obliged to our Rose, for contributing so largely to fill up this Sheet, in short she has left me no Room to scold, won't you conclude from hence that I am much disappointed, this I am sure you will—if I tell you otherwise youl perhaps not believe me, that I am at present in a truly Pacifick strain, the preparation for our journey and the disappointment the weather is to us, and your Wife¹ falling of from her purpose of going along with us, all join in subduing me and again, a journey so much talked of looses much of its relish before we go it; yet I hope it will requite us, for all the Bustle we have been at about it—I join my Rose in thanking you for the Books but wanting time to read them with attention, must defer my Oppinion of them till my Next, when I will quit some of the score I am Indebted to you, think not but I will be even with thee at sometime my Lad; this want of franks is a sad thing or it might as well have been done now—I am to tell you we have lost by Death, two of our old Neighbours, poor Mrs Squire and Tommy Sanders,—You will expect I shou'd say something about the good folks at Thornton, they are all well I expect, and your little favourite has got into Coat and Breeches, in which he looks as charming as ever you will say so, when you see him—But that I fear, is at some distance of time—I must have one throw at thee before I leave of, What none but poor Theakston, and Billy Addy in College now, poor disconsolate Knights Errant Knights shall I call you—Yes, you took pains to deserve the Character and twou'd be unjust not to bestow it on you Your Wife¹ about a Month ago was engaged with her Brother and Sister to make a party to Studley²

¹ Miss Peacock.

² i.e. to see Fountains Abbey: Hackfall is another show place, the 'Witches' Valley,' seven miles from Ripon: The view near by reaches from York to Roseberry Topping, mentioned in letter 11:

and Hackfall, but going to Al . . .¹ & back the evening before on her alighting [she] fell betwixt the M[achine and] the Horse by the Lad's [pulling] the Horse [too] hastily away, by which she [hurt] her leg and Arm, and continues lame of the foot yet, so tha[t is] the reason for her not going along [with us. We ex]pect her to join us at Sunderland—Well then my Lad tho' you take it so ill that we tell you, we shall scarce find time to write to [you ?] while we are abroad, that does not hinder, but we shall have time to read yours, and you will be sufficiently requited by our sending all Novelties we meet with from home, at our return. I think I have room for no more, yes I must tell you Mrs Cass² is at York, Cook goes into Cumberland with Scot on Sunday next, so that it is a Gadding Summer with us all hereabouts—Accept my sincere Wishes for your Happiness, and believe me Dear Billy Your most

Loving Aunt

E. WILSON.

Cusn Margery send her liking to Billy Addison, send the shades to let us see your performances.

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Ester must have been talking to someone and scribbling on her page while she talked. She finds another corner of the paper to add,

N.B.—We hope to set forwards on our journey some time the Next Week, but was afraid, if a Chaise from the North or any other Carriage shou'd happen to fall out, we might go sooner, which might prevent you of your having this.

Bella Pease courts Uncle William.

This seventh letter is written by Will Addison from Dinsdale to the Wilson girls at North Allerton. The date is not given, but must be in the summer of 1764.

O Woe! Woe! Woe! Auntie what must be done? Lost, quite lost upon my Credit! Out with your green Gowns, Ribbands,

¹ Here the wafer has torn away much of the paper; but the words supplied in brackets are a fair guess at the tale of the accident to poor Poky.

² Who, from Rose's letter, would seem to be their cook. She was in the kitchen when Will went in to give a letter to Mally, the servant.

Petticoats, Garters, Stockings, Aprons, Garters, necklaces, Ear Rings & the ten thousand other Accoutrements you Ladies make use of, directly.

I hope you will be in no Danger of Heart breaking ; but by all means muster up all your Resolution & Patience & wt ever you may think necessary for your Preservation, for really our old Parson has quite forsaken you. Poor dear Aunty ! How I pity you ! And yet you scarce deserve Pity. You to pretend to lay Claim to an old Batchelor, & yet refuse to come to visit him, because—forsooth—he never invited you. I thought you had known how to manage with such sort of Folks better. They must be met better half Way, or else no Coupling. Had you but follow'd the Method your happy Rival has, I cou'd have made him safe for you. Here she came slap to see him, without Invitation, without the least Acquaintance.

She runs half way into the Room & kisses him, gives him a Smile, drops him a Curtsy & takes a Chair close beside him. Then every Thing that he does, is so polite & gallant, that really she cannot refuse any Thing that's offered in so genteel a Manner. The Tea is good, the Cakes are excellent, in fine she never spent so agreeable a Day in her Life. Then at taking Leave another Kiss, another Curtsy ; how much she is obliged to him for that happy Day, but it wou'd add infinitely to the Obligation if he wou'd give her Leave to entertain him in Return ; Dear Sir, pray oblige me in it, bring Master & Miss with you ; nay I'll take no Excuse, I insist upon your fixing a Day. So strongly urged by a Lady, wt can flesh & Blood do ? The Day is fix'd ; Away we ride ; But in what Words can I pretend to paint to you the Reception we met with. So many Smiles & Simpers, so many Obligations & Pleasures talkt of that any Thing but an old Batchelor wou'd have been surfeited. Then at Dinner, his Plate heap'd, his every Wish & Want anticipated. So many Challenges to Fruit & Wine & every Thing she thought he liked, that I believe the Parson thought himself in the Elysian Feilds. The same Ceremony too repeated at Tea. Good Mr. Addison you eat nothing, & so many beggings & prayings about one more Dish & one more Slice, that if I be not mistaken his Waiscoat was obliged to be sent to the Tayler's, for a new Set of Buttons next Day. Then at Parting, Ogles, Curtsies, Kisses, pretty affected Confusion, Sighs—I won't positively swear to—Tears, & every Circumstance that cou'd excite Love or Compassion, were play'd off. The Parson comes Home, talks of her for a Day or two & forgets her. She not daunted at this first Disappointment, in a Week or fortnights Time, finds out a pretty present for him ; this gives her an Opportunity of shewing him her fine Writing & polite easy Manner of enditing. Good Sense—says he to me the other Day, may be as well discovered in a Card as in a Letter of two Sheets. This was the first News I

heard of
in Liver
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heard on my Arrival at Dinsdale. All was in a Bustle, a Servant in Livery sitting in Kitchen ; when I went up Stairs, I was desired to excuse him for five Minutes, he was very busy about an important Affair. You may be sure I was fit to hang myself to get at the Bottom on't ; Into the Stable I run. Matthew, whose Servant is this ? Wt did he come about ? & from whom ? I have not seen him yet Sir. Go & give him another Pint, take a Share of it wth him & worm it out of him. I will Sir. In the mean Time the Parson searches twenty Pack of Cards for a clean Knave of Hearts, & offers all the House three Shillings for a half Crown Peice. And who do you think at last this sly cunning Jade is ? Why—as my Couz Rose says—its no other than Bella Pease : but I suppose you've guess'd that long ago.

You cannot imagine what an Alteration it makes in him. So spruce, so clean, so much Powder in his Wig, so shining his Shoes, so smooth his Beard, so much care about the rolling of his Neckcloth—wch you know was always reckoned a bad Sign—and so very often at the Glass, that I really begin to be under woful Apprehensions. We have got so well too all of a sudden, Not one Complaint of long Nights or Want of Sleep ; no, no, I suppose his agreeable Dreams stop all that. He once told me, on my complaining of unequal Spirits, that he cou'd easily account for & imagine that ; I wish I may not account for his being almost at Death's Door last Night, & going, drest like a Bridegroom, to Mr. Chater's toDay in the same Manner. But however, I wou'd not have my dearest Aunt despair entirely ; for let him act as he pleases I am resolved to have no Woman for my Aunt but you : Do you think he won't pay me the Compliment of asking my Consent ? If he does, I promise you I'll put in very strongly for you. So take Comfort & hope the best. How I have rambled on about this Match ; but you know when one's Heart is in a Subject, one's never tired of talking about it. I hope to see you soon, then we will talk it all over. Let me ask my best of Aunts how her Arm does ? If it be agreeable to my Wishes, the Swelling & Pain has so entirely left you, that you cannot remember wch Arm you were stung in. Oh ! them ugly Wasps, how I have ever since & shall always detest them. I have sacrificed above an hundred & fifty to the Manes of your poor Arm since I came here. How does your Neighbour ? I hope you have not begun to hear any extraordinary Noise yet.¹ Has my Cuz & her met upon any tolerable Terms yet ? I have a hundred more Things to say to you & I have

¹ This is one of the enlivening little feuds which are fondly cherished in the country. Even to-day, hostile neighbours make fearful noises at night, to disturb their enemy, talk of one another in far from 'tolerable terms,' and warn each other in the local newspaper to stop scandalising Mr. So-and-so, or proceedings will be taken.

scarce left myself Room to tell you that I am your affectionate Nephew Will Addison.

Bella Pease lived at Newcastle, yet Will does not seem to have known the enterprising lady by sight. She did not succeed in catching the old parson. He died unmarried in 1772; his tombstone is still in the churchyard at Dinsdale.

The eighth letter is another of Will's letters from his Uncle's rectory at Dinsdale to Ester Wilson at North Allerton.

Teesdale Folk.

Come, come Auntie don't despair. Affairs begin to look better. I see a Love once fixed is not so easily eradicated as I imagined. However Absence & new Objects may blunt & deaden it, yet the Sight of the beloved Charmee at once recalls every sweet Idea, & the Passion recoils with greater Force & Violence.

What a delightful Journey shou'd I have had yesternight, but for a troublesome Thought that wou'd—spite of all my Endeavours to the Contrary—intrude itself? Every Step that my Horse takes, thought I, carries me further from North Allerton. I thought Miss Wilson never lookt so well in her Life, says my Uncle. He was so full of your Praises all the Way, & so wrapt up in the Contemplation of your inimitable Graces & all these kind of Things, that I really was in great Pain for his Neck. The Reins uselessly & thoughtlessly thrown on the Horse's Neck, stumble, stumble, went the Horse. Pray Sir take Care, zooks you keep no Hank—how do you spell Hank Auntie—Hank! Nonsense! says he, I tell thee I never heard a Woman talk so prettily in my Life. I wish I had not promised to meet them¹ then I wou'd certainly have sit with them the whole Afternoon: But however the next Time I go to North Allerton, I'll take care & keep myself free from such foolish idle Engagements.

Sunday.

You will imagine me a very lazy Fellow to let two whole Days elapse without writing a Word. But my amiable Judge must hear my Plea, before she condemns me. Thursday I intended to devote entirely to my Pen, but before I had well finish'd the first Side, up comes my Sister in a violent Hurry, "Billy, Billy, here's two Gentlemen want you. What Sort of Men are they? Betty says they are both Parsons. And who do you think one of these Parson's

¹ An engagement known to Esther, but not to us.

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was ? Why my Honest Friend Bob Dale, who, I thought, snug in his aerial Mansion amongst the Muses, in the closest recess of alma Mater. Faith, I was obliged to rub my Eyes, half a dozen Times before I cou'd believe them. Moor, you knew him at Danby, was the other. They kept me employ'd all that Day. By the by, Aunt, you owe me your Thanks for my Performance of the Promise I made to bring Dale down with me. For it was in a great Measure, by my Persuasion, that he made his Appearance in this Part of the Globe. Well, to go on with my Excuse ; on Friday, I put on the Air of Business, & went a money gathering, attended by my Uncle & our old Sage.¹ Amongst others, I call'd on Jammy Wilkinson & there I saw a Sight of Horror, that Tongue can't speak, nor Speech express. You knew Miss Todd, I dare say, alas, where you to see her now, when Mrs. Wilkinson. Thin, emaciated, hollow eyed, spiritless, dejected, her Voice so low & broken you can scarce distinguish a Word ; her Walk slow, solemn & tottering ; Her Dress almost bedlamitish, & such an Air of Woe, Anguish & Despair spread over her Countenance that it wou'd peirce an Heart of Stone. But then to see that Brute her Husband wallowing in Dirt & Liquor, worse than a Hog, nay even in his Behaviour to her, during the little Time we stopt, insolent, overbearing & illnated ; to see him so & know him to be the Cause of her Unhappiness, had such an Effect upon me, that I cou'd not command myself, even so much as to be barely civil to him ; tho' otherwise he wou'd have claim'd my kindest Notice, by mentioning a certain Person with an Air of Regard & Friendship. She, poor Woman, seem'd to wish to be alone, & she shrunk, as it were, from our Enquiries & Observations, scarce lifting up her halfclos'd Eyes, & regarding us almost with Terror ; and as I look'd at her a little earnestly, tho' I had Tears in my Eyes for her, she seem'd so confused & oppressed, that I hastened out of the House, exclaiming against her Husband & praying for & pitying her. I don't remember I was ever so shocked in my Life. I cannot tell you half my Thoughts upon the Occasion. From thence I proceeded to Yarum² ; my Uncle returned home.

The first Place, I was conducted to on my Arrival, was the Church ; there was Miss Harrison, Miss Walker's, & twenty more Misses I forget, playing on the Organ. The whole Town was in an uproar on account of Doct^r Kirton's Christning. Accounts of the Dead & Wounded carried of the Feild were printing ; & such a Bacchanalian Fight was expected in the Evening as Yarum never saw, nor Mother Tees thro' all its Windings heard of. These & suchlike Gallant Shews kept me so late, that the old Gentleman

¹ This old sage is Matthew, who was a privileged person with his master, the parson.

² Yarm, the town on the Tees farther east than Dinsdale.

imagin'd he had quite lost me ; & Matthew was posted away without a Saddle to seek me. He wou'd have me drown'd at all Hazards. I had the Water to cross twice & knew neither of the Fords. With much ado he was persuaded, that I really was alive, when he saw me eating my Supper. Had he considered the Meaning of the two old Proverbs, favourable—I thank them—as they are & have been frequently to me, he wou'd not have been under the least Apprehension for my Safety.¹

Hark ! The Bell tolls for Prayers. You ought to thank me for telling you it is a Bell, you might easily have mistaken it for a fire shovel.

This diary letter ends abruptly with no signature. Somebody was going by North Allerton and Will seized the chance to get the budget sent to Rose ; this would be the cause of this want of finish.

The ninth letter is once more an Oxford letter. It is directed to:

Miss Rose Wilson

North Allerton

Yorkshire

Will Addison is again at

Linc. Coll. Oxon.

Nov. 20th, 1764.

Fly happy Paper ! On the Wings of Love & Freindship fly to the lovely Hands of the most amiable of Women & assure her of her Addison's Health ! Assure her too, that neither Time nor Absence, neither Accident nor Misfortune can ever erase her charming Image from his Breast. Erase, did I say ? 'Tis impossible to diminish it : Excuse both Sisters this Rhapsody. From a Heart absorbed by Love & softened by Absence it burst forth. O baneful Absence ! I feel thy Pangs most exquisitely keen ! Help me, my Rosy, to support it : I own myself inferior to the Task ; Your gentle Words alone can soothe my Mind to Peace : Your Health, Happiness & Generosity alone can give me Ease & make my Bondage tolerable. I was surprized to find myself so calm on an Occasion that I so much dreaded ; nay I continued so in some Degree till I reached Oxford. The Meeting with Willy Birdsall,² the strange Faces in the Coach, the Hurry & Bustle of the Town, the Welcomings & Congratulations

¹ 'Those cannot be drowned who are born to be hanged.' This, in some rough form, must be one of the proverbs Will refers to. The windings of the Tees make the roads about it very dangerous going. Theakston's eldest son was drowned in one as he was out hunting, in broad daylight.

² This youth would be one of the cousins whose names occur in every letter. He is spoken of later as working in Ripon and finding that city a less attractive place than North Allerton, which would be his home.

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of my Friends in College,¹ & my own Endeavours to disengage & disperse my Thoughts, threw me into a kind of insensible Stupidity.

But no sooner was I left alone, than my Sensibility returned upon me with a Vengeance. Every Thing I did, every Thing I saw recalled to my Mind those best of Friends I had so lately parted with, I looked round my Room, I searched my Study, I went into my Bed Room, all was void, desolate & comfortless. But I am repeating a Fault the Moment I've begged Pardon for it. Yet what else can I say or write? I have always so much accustomed my Pen to follow the Dictates of my Heart that I cannot now prevail upon it to quit a Subject that so entirely engrosses the Attention of its Tutor. One Tune, Aunty & then we'll try.

Now for my Journey. That was much more agreeable than I expected or desired. You know, Aunty, there is a Pleasure in Madness that none but Madmen know. Good nature & good Manners were never more practised in a Stage Coach. Every Body did his utmost to please & oblige. The Ladies ruled & directed every Thing: And what is the most extraordinary we continued in good Humour with one another to the End of our Journey. Ovington² met me at Tadcaster.³ We had a private Conversation for about ten Minutes. I told him my Uncle's Determination with regard to his Debts, he did not seem in the least disappointed; But however, I assured him, he need not be at all uneasy about the Note,⁴ nor any Thing else I cou'd be of Service to him in. He breakfasted with me & we parted. Lord Grantham's second Son—who wears a Nobleman's Gown at Cambridge—one Captain Lovel—if ever you heard of him—two Ladies—Names as well as Characters unknown—Will Birdsall & your humble Servant were the polite Company in the Fly. Perhaps a secret Uneasiness & the Reserve so peculiar to the English when they meet with Strangers made most of us either Sleep or pretend to sleep the first Day. But the being jumbled together for near two Hours in the Dark, made us quite intimate at Supper. Never was any Mortal so tormented as poor Pregarlick in Town.⁵ Nothing but Confusion & Noise, Dissipation & Nonsense, Coughs & Headachs. I blessed my Stars when I found myself clear of it. Willy's

¹ This was the first time that Will had been allowed to call his engagement to Rose an acknowledged thing; also at Oxford he remembers the usual spelling of the word 'friends'!

² Ovington was the tenant of one of Uncle William's farms. This incident is a good example of Will Addison's financial transactions. It was his method throughout his life.

³ Seven miles south-west of York.

⁴ It was most likely that this note was meant to be at least part of Will's allowance.

⁵ This may have some reference to Will Addison's time of punishment referred to in his last letter from Oxford. He may have gone to town to either produce or act in this play. There is no trace of it left.

Observations on London were the only Things that pleased me. 'They've plaguy high Houses in this Part of the Country,' says he. As the Oxford Coaches were all full for Thursday I was obliged to stay one Day longer in Town than I intended. The Play Bills tell us of the Provoked Husband or The Journey to London¹; I cou'd not resist the Temptation of having an Opportunity to see one of my greatest Favourites acted: I took Willy with me. The play delighted him; the Pantomime astonished him. There was a very full House & a great many Ladies; I chose a Place where we had an Opportunity of veiwing all the Company in the House. I dare say, he thought he never had a proper Notion of Elysium before, at least if one may judge from his Eyes, he did not talk much. He desired his best Respects to Miss Wilsons when I wrote to them. I writ yesterday to my Uncle. Oxford is excessively dull at present; oh! how I hate a College Life. Send me kind Heaven calm Retreat, Content is all that's noble good & great. I shall think every Day an Age till I hear how my Rosy is. Fancy delights in Shades; she paints with black. Adieu my dear Miss Wilson May Health & Happiness attend the sweet the amiable Sister of our Love prays your & her most affectionate

WILL ADDISON.

The tenth and eleventh letters are respectively from Rose and from Ester Wilson, sent to W. Addison at 'Lincoln's College,' Oxford. We may note in passing the continuance of the old spelling 'then' for 'than.'

North Allerton Nov. 29, 1764.

I cannot help accusing my dearest Billy for not letting us hear from him before, as thou gave me the pleasure to hope wee might, for there was a week difference but by the date of thy Letter it has been six days in coming which is two days more then I expected and thou knows what that thing called suspense is. I woud have wrote upon the receipt of thine but upon this account, that thy uncle was to have been in town this week and I thought the fore end of it was the most likely; upon this I thought it would be an additional pleasure to thee to hear of his and thy sisters health as they may not write so soon but was determin'd to defer it no longer as it is so uncertain with regard to his Coming, Im surprised at thee for applying to me for advice who am so little capable of taking it myself, tho we are all ready to give it to another but be assured my Dearest Lad of this that it will always give me the greatest pleasure to hear that thou art happy and well, so upon that account I hope

¹ This was the play written by Sir John Vanbrugh, added to by Cibber, rejected by a faction, and again cut down to its original size.

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VOL. LX

thou will endeavour to be so, and if the assurance of my better health can be any addition to it I here Confirm it so far that I am quite stout again, not that I have venter'd out of doors yet, but I have a little art in this for thou must know Mrs. Dowson's Christning¹ is to Morrow so if I had gone out before, they would not excuse me going there, which is a thing which is very disagreeable to me we have not seen Jacky² since the day thou went he was much disappointed to find thou was gone, Bobby³ was so obliging as to come and drink tea with us last sunday, he is very well Mr. Beckett was here yesterday and he tells us that he and Mr. Routh⁴ are for Richmond⁵ on tuesday again and that things seem to advance apace, so that we shall have the wedding sooner than we expected, we had a letter from Polly⁶ yesterday she seems to like Ayton⁷ very well, wee have got the most amiable Doc Reed, married at last but what is the most remarkable is, the day that they were married there was another Couple, and amongst them they had but four Eyes, but he has not brought his Lady home yet, it was very lucky for poor Willy⁸ that he had thee to introduce him to the Play for one does not love that strangers should see one's Yorkshire like behaviour, what does thou think of that Lord Grantham's Son he seems a very stupid thing in Conversation, we think of going to Thornton le moor in about a fortnights time for we are great strangers there, I forgot to give thee some beads along with thee,⁹ but if thou should want, a little white wax will do as well, but if thou can have courage to have it out I believe it to be the best,¹⁰ all thy acquaintance are glad to hear thou art well and send their best Compliments to thee, and believe me my Dearest Billy to be

affectionately

thine ROSE WILSON.

The eleventh letter is from Ester Wilson to Will Addison; even when her sister was definitely engaged to Will she always wrote to him whenever Rose did. Yet she did not go to their wedding, and except that Rose wrote from North Allerton to her husband soon after their marriage, and that Ester left her valuable property at Danby near Allerton to Rose's son, Will, she might have died on

¹ Mrs. Dowson is one more cousin.

² Will's youngest brother.

³ Will's second brother, who had had work in London.

⁴ Mr. Routh, of Thirsk, who was marrying Rose's cousin Rose Coats.

⁵ The bride's home.

⁶ Polly Coats, sister of the bride; she married the Dr. Dent already mentioned.

⁷ Twelve miles east of Darlington.

⁸ The Willy Birdsall who went as far as London with Will.

⁹ White china beads were pushed into a hollow tooth to protect the exposed nerve. The frugal country man never went to a dentist.

¹⁰ As Parson Robinson had, just before, whipped out the wrong tooth, Will would not be likely to take this advice.

their wedding day. The Dowson clan here mentioned were cousins of the Addisons.

WELL MY DEAR BILLY,

So thou wast disposed to give me an Opportunity of Exercising my Patience, by waiting a Week longer for thy letter—then we expected to have done, but the whole of it was not owing to thee neither, the Post was somewhat in fault, for it was Six days in coming, I am glad however thou had so pleasant a journey,—and the Company so agreeable. Willy Birdsall would esteem himself very lucky In meeting one who could Introduce him to a little knowledge of the Town. Poor Lad, I was much pleased with his Simplicity in the Observations he made of the Buildings, and again that he had the Conduct of suppressing his surprise at the Play, otherwise then what escaped thro those windows of the Soul—the Eyes—Ive a great Oppinion I shoud make a very Foolish Figure in the great Metropolis, if I was wanting an advantageous Introduction, I shoud expect that nothing would be more thought of by me at the time, then my Country Woman, Margery Moorstout.¹ Now this might be some advantage to me as I woud not willingly be taken for a Gauvison² dost think I shoud not look like a Gauvison. What makes me recollect this with so much pleasure Ive had a letter from our Cousⁿ Mary Coats who is now at Canny Ayton and tells me she has ever in View, that great high Mountain call'd Rose Berry Toppin.

My Rose, has told thee above that our Cousⁿ Rose advances apace towards the Land of Matrimony, Now this can afford nothing but Mortification to thy Aunt to see every young Chit push by her at this rate, therefore it lays upon thee to help me among the Collegians, and I will be doing the best for myself at home, in the meantime, so that betwixt us we may be able to do somewhat towards, But at Present I rest most upon thee, as we have lost all our Smarts.³ The Drurys left us the last Week and we are not likely to get any fresh ones till towards Spring. I am to be at Mrs. Dowson's Christning to Morrow, so thou may think my Lass is a good deal Better, but not so well as to venture to be one of the Guests,⁴ we shall have nothing but Carding I fancy, as the sponsors are of the graver sort, Viz. Mr. Geo: Dowson, Mr. York⁴ and Mrs. Dowson, up the Street. We used sometimes to have a Dance upon these occasions, But tempora Mutantur for that, My Nephew Tom has got

¹ There is no trace of these characters in any records of old plays. *Pregartick in Town* was probably responsible for them; the play that seems to have taken Will up to town on the unauthorised visit which brought him so much trouble, spoken of in his earlier letters.

² The Smarts were the young men of fashion who were later called The Beauz.

³ Rose had not betrayed her 'little Art' to Ester!

⁴ A doctor in Allerton.

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a new Accidence today, and he is to learn me latin, and this is to shew I have a little smattering before he begins with me—We have nothing but good hearing of the Folks at Thornton, so have little to say farther But that my Cuz and Rose are each of em Possessed of a Corner, and a Great Chair, Chatting to each other. At the request of my Cuz I am to join Mr. Drury's the (younger) Comps with hers; and both, with my own to one Billy Addison To whom I beg leave to subscribe myself

Dearest Billy Most affectionately thine

E. WILSON.

The twelfth letter is the last love letter of Will Addison's; it was written from Dinsdale on the subject of marriage settlements and possible delay. It is also the one letter sent exclusively to Rose. There may be a hint of some opposition from Ester.

Date, probably, Summer, 1765.

I beg my dearest Girl's Pardon for suffering my Uncle to come upon her wthout giving her Notice as she desired: But I have two Pleas to urge in my own Favour; the one is my Uncle's Intent to have come to N: Allerton even toDay had the Weather proved favourable, the other the Impossibility of conveying a Letter to you without sending to Darton¹ on purpose. Not one of the Farmer's near us had any Business at your Fair, as they told Matthew upon his Enquiry. My Sister has obtained Leave from my Uncle to spend the Race Week at Miss Sedgwick's;² she was particularly to have sent them Notice but cou'd not: she chooses not to acquaint her Uncle with her Disappointment in not sending her Letter as he might object to her going upon them, unawares.

Neither can we at any Time foretell a Journey one Night (ahead?) at Dinsdale. We have a great Dislike to any Thing that looks like Rain Wind or ought but Sun Shine. A Cloud in the West may prevent our Journey to Morrow. My Prayers shall be offered up for a fair Day; for the Suspense I labour under, I assure my lovely Rose, is almost intollerable. No doubt you'll wonder to see me begin so coolly wth Trifles, when I have a Thought, that in spite of my utmost Endeavours, will now & then weigh down my Heart. It is—I dare not tell you what it is. Thus much I tell you, my whole Soul is employed in what pass'd betwixt us at our last Intervew. My Charmer gave me Leave to hope the best; fulfil my Hopes & then I am happy. But can I be a Man & not be affected when the Happiness or Misery of my whole Life is perhaps at Stake? Can I

¹ Darlington, shortened to Darton, their post town, five miles east of Dinsdale. Will was certainly no walker, to make such an excuse.

² This would be at Richmond, for the Catterick races.

be the ardent Lover I profess myself to be, & not feel—severely feel the Fluctuation of different Passions when the Mistress of my Heart is on the Point of refusing or accepting me? Think, my Rosy, on the many happy Hours you & I have spent together: Can you imagine no Happiness in the unreserved Confidence of an affectionate & grateful Friend? Can you imagine no Transport in the Union of Hearts entirely devoted to one another? Have you no Idea of a Pleasure arising from the grateful Services of the Man you love? Is there nothing in this Picture strikes you? Reverse it, & see if that can gain itself a Title to your Pity & Compassion. But I cannot draw it. Full well my Rosy knows I have neither Thought nor Wish for ought on Earth but what centers in, or may be agreeable to her. She knows had I the Universe I wou'd throw it at her Feet. It is my Misfortune¹ not my Fault than (that?) my Income does not answer your Wish. I have offered all that is in my Power. Yet let me observe, that with God's Blessing, a few a very few Years will abundantly supply this Deficiency. You allow, w^t we shall have at present will afford us a Competency; will not Peace Joy & mutual Happiness recompense us for a Superfluity? Is twenty Pound a Year for a few Years preferred to the Felicity of a Man you own your Esteem for? Do not my dearest Girl let me think so! Let me above all recommend it to you to suffer your own Judgment to be your Guide in a Matter of this Consequence. Sound People can Talk with great Composure & Temper of loosing an Arm or a Leg: but the poor Sufferer is alone a competent Judge of the Anguish that attends the Operation: the Bystanders feel no Pain; nor make Allowances for his Complaints.² What I write at this Time my dear Girl, I write only for your own Perusal; if you agree to be mine, you will make Allowances for the Anguish of the Heart that writ it; if not, I had rather expose myself to your Generosity than any other's; Permit me ever to call you MY dearest Rosy, & you may depend on my ever remaining

your grateful & aff:

WILL: ADDISON.

I lay before my Uncle your Proposal for him not to insist upon the Interest, till he puts us in Possession of Rounton.³ He gave me no Answer but rise from his Chair & walked rather in a Hurry about the Room. But I leave all to your Management. I have said all I cou'd or durst: It is a Subject too near my Heart for me to pre-

¹ Will's father had wasted his fortune.

² With no chloroform!

³ West Rounton was another living held by the old parson; it is in Yorkshire, about halfway between Dinsdale and North Allerton. Will held the living until the death of his uncle in 1772.

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your WILL: ADDISON.

P.S.—Think what Hours of Torment & Suspense I shall pass this Day. To Day decides all. Or Welcome or Farewell.

The thirteenth letter was a hasty note sent to Ester Wilson after the wedding ; it seems to have been a matter of indifference to people at that period, to be present at the ceremony in church.

To Miss Wilson at

Thornton le Moor

Dinsdale, Friday night, 10 a clock.

MY DEAR MISS WILSON will give me Leave to beg her Congratulations on the happy Occasion, that has given me the Honour & Joy of calling her Sister. My dear Girl lays her Commands upon me to tell you we are well & that we are disappointed in not seeing Allerton so soon as we expected.

Your Wishes will determine us in receiving you by Mr. Becketts Horses or in paying a Visit at Thornton le Moor & returning wth you.

My dear Wilson may be assured I have every Felicity a Mortal can expect when I tell her I am the happy Husband of Rose Wilson & her

most affectionate Brother

WILL: ADDISON.

It is a most triumphant signature which Will Addison sets to this letter ; very different from the shaky writing in the last letter.

Fourteenth letter : half a year later Will is revisiting his College at Oxford ; Rose gives him home news and forwards a remittance.

To the Rev. Mr. William Addison

Lincoln College

Oxford

North Allerton, Feb. 16, 1766.

I received my dearest Billeys Letter with the greatest pleasure to hear that he keeps well for I begun to be very uneasy that thou did not write from London, as Letters is so Long in coming, I hope in my next thou wilt be able to tell me when I am to have the pleasure to see my Dearest Lad again. I beg thou wilt write as soon as thou receives this, for this will be five Days in coming and

five More will be ten Days before I can hear from thee again which makes one very unhappy, in regard to hearing from one another.

I can give thee my Dear, this pleasure, that I have been Charmingly these three or four Days past and I hope I shall Continue so, what doest thou think, I wrote to my Uncle last Sunday and both he and Matthew was at Darlington and did not get the Letter so on our Fair Day Matthew and Pally Shipley¹ came on, and stayed all Night so was obliged to write by them to let my Uncle know that we Continued Nanny till May Day. Pally was very sorry to go Back again thou knows we expected Mrs. Routh to come and stay with us but she and Cousn Pally came on Wednesday, the worst Day I ever saw, Mr. Dent² came with them but he and Mrs. Routh³ returned in the Chaise together that Night Cousn Pally only stayed two Nights, my sister Beckett came on Sunday and stayd with us till Friday poor Lass, she was but very badly when she Left us, I know not what to be done about Mr. Dawson for both my Sisters waited upon him to ask him Leave to lay the Mannure on but he was a Little short, and said it was Time enough this two Months or he wou'd not have him Lay it on at all, so we can do nothing till thou comes home again, we had Mr. Hotham stayd three Nights with us so I paid him for the Cake and stockings my sister had a Letter from sister Pally which she will answer to Day so will Let them know how thou Does but woud have thee to write to thy Uncle as he may take it unkind if thou does not we expect to see them as soon as the Weather will permit I have been very Luckey to meet with a Bill agreeable to thy order of Mr. Langdale who sends his Compts to thee and Bobby⁴ Joyns my sister in (love ?) to thee this or what ever else I can do for my Dearest Billy

he may Command his ever Affectionat Wife

ROSE ADDISON.

Except for two letters from the gay cousins at Thirsk, choosing a servant for Rose at five pounds a year, there is no further word of Rose.

The register of burials at North Allerton state that Rosamund, wife of William Addison, was buried on August 29, 1768. Her baby daughter, Frances Addison, died six months later. Her son, William, survived her. He became an extremely prosperous person, and was devoted to his father, to whom he wrote regularly. He called his second daughter Rosamund, after his mother.

These sound cold records after the glowing life of the love letters, but they are all that remains of the end.

¹ A prospective servant.

² Dr. Dent married Rose's cousin, Pally Coats.

³ Formerly Rose Coats.

⁴ Will's brother, now working with this Mr. Langdale in North Allerton.

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THE PHILISTINE.

BY E. M. DELAFIELD.

I.

He was rather a stolid little boy, but they did their very best with him.

He had, of course, exactly the same treats as the other children, the same pleasures, the same privileges. His toys and presents were better than theirs, if anything, because his aunt, in her heart of hearts, knew him to be less attractive than her own Cynthia and Jeremy and Diana.

For one thing, Colin wasn't as good-looking as they were, and for another, he was less intelligent. Cynthia, at nine years old, had a vivid, original mind, and the few people—but they were people who really knew—to whom Lady Winningham showed her little poems, had seen great promise in them.

Jeremy, a year younger, had thick, tight curls of brown hair all over his head, beautiful, long-lashed brown eyes, and an adorable smile. His manners were perfect. He said things—innocent, naïf, irresistible things—about God, and the fairies, and how much he loved his mother.

Lady Winningham's youngest girl, Diana, was precociously intelligent too, with a delightfully extensive and grown-up vocabulary at five years old. She had straight, square-cut, bobbed brown hair, like Cynthia, but she was lovelier than either of the others, and her eyes were a pure, deep blue, fringed with long, curled black lashes.

All Lady Winningham's artist friends wanted to paint Diana, but only Sir Frederick Lorton, the best-known portrait painter in England, was allowed to do so. The portrait was exhibited at the Royal Academy.

Colin was the only child of Lady Winningham's widowed brother-in-law, and he had been sent home to her from India, when his mother died. He was five years old then, and now he was eight.

He was a dear little boy, and Lady Winningham felt remorsefully that he might have been a *darling* little boy if it hadn't been that Cynthia and Jeremy and Diana unconsciously set such a very high standard of charm and intelligence. Intelligence counted for so

very much, in that political-artistic section of society in which the Verulams lived. Most children of wealthy parents could be made tolerably pretty, after all, and if they weren't born with brains and personality, they stood little chance of individual distinction.

Not that Colin had not got personality.

Lady Winningham, who was President of the Cult of the Children Society, and had written a little book about child-psychology, had studied Colin on his own merits, as it were. And she quite recognised that he had character, and even imagination, of a sort, although when the children were all taken to see 'Peter Pan,' and told to clap their hands if they believed in fairies, he was the only one of Lady Winningham's large party who did not clap.

'But I *don't* believe in them, really,' said Colin, rather pale.

'But Tinker-Bell!' protested Jeremy. 'She'd have died, if we hadn't clapped!'

'And we do believe in fairies,' said Cynthia firmly.

'Then it was all right for you to clap,' said Colin. 'There were enough of you without me.'

But afterwards, he was very silent for a long while, and looked worried.

Lady Winningham saw that, and she changed her seat in one of the intervals and came beside him.

'Do you like it, darling?'

'Oh yes,' he said, unusually emphatic. But his face had not grown scarlet with excitement, like little Diana's, and he was not delightfully, stammeringly enthusiastic, like Jeremy. Presently he asked Lady Winningham, in rather a troubled way:

'I wasn't unkind, or naughty, was I, not to clap for Tinker Bell?'

'Not at all,' she was obliged to answer. 'The children were only asked to clap if they believed in fairies.'

'I don't really believe in them,' Colin said apologetically. 'Do you, Aunt Doreen?'

'Shall I tell you a secret?' she answered, bending her charming, smiling face down to his. 'I like to *pretend* that I believe in fairies, little Colin.'

Any one of the others would have responded to her whimsical fancy—they would have understood. But Colin only looked up at her with solemn grey eyes staring rather stupidly out of a puzzled face.

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'Oh, belovedest, isn't it marvellous!' said Cynthia, her eyes shining and dancing with sheer rapture.

Well, Colin had not got the same capacity for enjoyment, that was all. And even if he had had it, he would not have been able to express it in words.

He was an *ordinary* child.

'He'll never suffer as much as I'm afraid my darlings will, because he'll never feel as much,' said Lady Winningham to the French nursery governess, who had so many certificates of her training as a teacher, and as a student of psychology, and as a hospital nurse, that she was as expensive as a finishing-governess.

'Probably not, Lady Winningham. But I think they do each other good. Cynthia's and Jeremy's enthusiastic ways will help Colin to be less stolid in time. And in one way, of course, it's a relief that he's not as excitable as they are.'

The head-nurse said the same.

Diana, before a party, or a pantomime, was positively ill with excitement sometimes. They never dared to tell her of anything, until just before it was going to happen.

But Colin never looked forward to things, like that. He lived in the present.

'Such a relief,' said Lady Winningham, rather wistfully. She could not help wondering sometimes what her brother-in-law, Vivian, would think of his only child, when he came home. . . . But Colin's mother, whom she had known well as a girl, had been rather stolid, too.

Every day the children went to play in Kensington Gardens. The little procession came out at the front door of the house in Lowndes Square, and Lady Winningham, who adored her children, watched them from the window of the dining-room, where she was having breakfast after her ride in the Park.

First the under-nurse and the footman, carefully lifting the smart white perambulator down the steps, then Nurse, in stiff white piqué, carrying the rose-coloured silk bundle that was the four-months-old baby, and depositing him carefully amongst his lacy shawls and pillows, under the silk-fringed summer awning of the pram. Then Diana, adorable in a tiny, skimpy frock of palest lemon-colour, with lemon-coloured streamers falling from her shady hat, and sandals on her beautiful little slim brown feet. She was carrying a ridiculous little doll's parasol, and walking by herself just as she always did. There was a certain dainty pride about

Diana that never allowed her to accept the nurse's hand. She walked by the side of the pram, erect and exquisite.

After the nursery party, Mademoiselle and the elder children came down the steps. In the gardens they would all coalesce, but the nursery party always started first.

Lady Winningham, peeping out between the window-boxes of scarlet geraniums and white daisies, and the edge of the red-striped sun-blind, watched them.

Mademoiselle was neat, efficient, French-looking—from the top of her shiny black straw hat, tipped forward over her black hair, to the black patent-leather belt placed very low down on her short-sleeved, black-and-white check frock, and the pointed tips of her buttoned black boots. She was drawing on black kid gloves that came half-way up her arms.

One on each side of her were the two little boys. They were dressed alike, in white silk shirts and silk ties, and dark knickerbockers. Neither wore a cap, and Jeremy's thick curls looked burnished in the strong July sunlight. People always turned to look at him and at those wonderful curls.

Colin's hair was quite straight, and it suited him best to have it cut very short. It was of no particular colour. Both little boys held themselves very upright, but while Colin was stocky and rather short, Jeremy was tall and slim and beautifully made, like a little statue.

Then Cynthia came out of the house, quick and slender and radiating vitality in every graceful gesture. Her frock and hat were the replica of little Diana's, but instead of the minute, absurd parasol, some heavenly instinct had caused her to take from the big glass bowl in the hall a handful of great mauve sweet peas that looked like butterflies against the pale, soft folds of her frock.

Cynthia's strong, instinctive sense of beauty was a joy to her mother.

She seemed to dance, rather than walk, along the hot pavement, her long, slim brown legs bare to the sun. From the little vivid, glancing gestures of her hands and head, Lady Winningham knew that she was talking. She could even guess what Cynthia was talking about. The party.

They were giving a party, the next day, on Colin's birthday, just before going down into the country. It was actually three years since the Winnings had given a children's party. One thing and another had prevented it.

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This was called Colin's party, but, as usual, the other children were far more excited about it than he was.

Lady Winningham herself was a tiny bit excited about it, because, for the first time, Royalty—very young Royalty—was to be her guest.

She wanted the party to be a great success.

Smiling, she turned away from the window.

Cynthia's mother had been quite right.

The children were talking about the party.

'I'm looking forward to it more than I've ever looked forward to anything in all my life,' said Jeremy solemnly. 'I think, if anything happened to prevent it now, I'd die.'

'Oh no, you wouldn't,' said Cynthia scornfully. 'Besides, nothing *could* happen to prevent it.'

They knew little of disappointments, any of them. They were not allowed to experience disappointments, if their mother could possibly prevent it, because they were such terribly highly strung children.

'Mademoiselle, may Diana be told about the party yet?'

'She may be told, but she isn't to know which day it is till the last minute,' said Mademoiselle, who knew very well that it would be impossible to keep sharp little Diana from the infectious excitement and sense of preparation that had already begun to pervade the house.

So they were able to talk about the party freely, when they joined Diana and the nurses.

Cynthia did not want to talk about anything else, and the others always followed her lead. Except sometimes Colin, who was what Nurse called 'independent.'

He was independent to-day, and when he grew tired of hearing Cynthia and Jeremy discuss what games they would play at the party, and Diana chatter about her new frock with the roses on it, he got up and went away and bounced his ball on the Broad Walk.

He was pleased about the party, and Aunt Doreen had allowed him to choose what the entertainment should be, and he had chosen a conjurer, and she had said that *perhaps* he would have a cable from daddy, like last year, for his birthday—but Colin did not feel that he could think, and talk, and plan about nothing but the party, like the others.

Mademoiselle often said that he had no imagination, and Colin

felt sure that she was right. He was not certain that he even wanted to have an imagination, much. He knew that he was stupid, compared with Jeremy and Cynthia, but at least he did not have crying fits—like a girl—as Jeremy occasionally had, and he did not stammer, from pure eagerness, as Cynthia did, when she got excited.

He did hope, very much, that there might be a cable from Daddy on his birthday, because that would be something of his very own. No one would be able to say that the others cared more than he did, because it would not have anything at all to do with the others.

Feeling rather mean, but not able to help it, Colin secretly wished that the others might not know anything at all about his cable, if it did come. Then they could not exclaim, and be excited, and say things, and make Colin feel—and look—stupider than ever.

On the way home he was very silent, trying to think of a plan by which he could prevent the other children from seeing his cable. Perhaps they would be so busy getting ready for the party that they would not remember about it.

When the next day came it really seemed as though it might be so.

The children flew up and down stairs, even down into the kitchen, where the good-natured chef showed them the cakes and the jellies and the pink and white creams, and dishes of coloured sweets, and an amusing log made out of chocolate with chopped-up green stuff all over it, and cream inside it.

They ran into the dining-room, too, and saw the long, decorated table, and the rows of little gilt chairs.

'There are other chairs in the drawing-room—millions more of them, for the conjurer,' said Diana.

'Let's go up there.'

'Let's,' said Cynthia and Jeremy.

They dashed off.

Colin was just going to follow, when he looked out of the window. He had been looking out of the window at intervals all day long.

But this time, a telegraph boy really was crossing the square, and glancing up at the numbers. It must, surely, be Daddy's cable, and he could take it himself, and open it, and there would be nobody there to say that he did not seem to care half as much as Master Jeremy, not if it *were* his own father. . . .

Colin, for once moving quickly, ran out to the hall and opened the front door before the boy could ring the bell.

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'Is it a foreign telegram—a cable?' he asked anxiously.

'Yes, addressed Winningham.'

'Then it's mine,' said Colin with decision. 'There isn't any answer.'

He had often heard this said, and felt sure it was right.

The telegraph boy, whistling, went away.

Colin retreated to the linen cupboard on the schoolroom landing, which was large and light, and to which people seldom came, and sat down on the floor to decipher his birthday cable.

'Regret inform you Major Vivian Winningham dangerously ill cholera will cable progress.'

Colin's face slowly became pink, and then the colour ebbed away again and left him rather white.

He sat on the floor of the linen cupboard for a long while, not moving.

If Aunt Doreen knew about the cable, the party would have to be stopped, surely. And Diana would cry herself ill, and everybody would be in a dreadful state, and what would happen to all those beautiful cakes? Probably they would be vexed with him, too, for having opened the telegram.

Colin's mind, his slowly moving, tenacious mind, had not yet begun to work on the exact meaning of 'dangerously ill.' For days he had heard of nothing but the party, and the party had become the alpha and omega of existence.

It was impossible that it should be stopped. 'If no one knows but me,' thought Colin, 'it'll be all right.'

He had a horrible feeling that it would be naughty to say nothing about the cable, and yet he felt that they would all blame him if he told about it, and stopped the party. Nothing mattered, really, except the party. They had thought he did not understand what a great event it was, because he could not get excited like the others, but at least he could see how very important they all thought it.

Presently he stuffed the cable into the pocket of his breeches, rose slowly and carefully to his feet, and went into the schoolroom again.

II.

The brilliant, successful party was over, the gilt chairs were stacked together, seat upon seat, ready to be taken away again, and

the children—one with a beautiful present—had all long since gone home.

Cynthia and Jeremy and Colin and Diana had been put to bed. Jeremy had said 'Thank you, you darling, beautiful Mummie, for such a lovely, *glittering* party.'

His choice of words was always fantastic and charming.

Even Colin had hugged his aunt with unusual enthusiasm, and said he had never enjoyed any party so much.

'No wonder,' said Mademoiselle to Nurse, with whom she was on friendly terms.

'That conjurer was good, wasn't he?' said Nurse. 'The best in London, they say. I never saw anything like him, myself. Why, I couldn't have told how he got those toys into the box with the flags.'

'If you please, Nurse,' said the under-nurse, entering with her hands full of little garments, 'I found this in Master Colin's pocket.'

She put the crumpled telegram, in its torn envelope, into Nurse's hands.

Nurse put on her spectacles and read it, and said, 'What in the name of gracious——' and handed the telegram to Mademoiselle.

There was a knock at the door, and the housemaid came in.

'If you please, Nurse, her ladyship wishes to see you in the boudoir at once.'

'Take this,' said Mademoiselle, with presence of mind, and gave back the telegram.

In the boudoir, Lady Winningham sat with another telegram open in front of her. Her pretty face was pale and tear-stained.

'Nurse, I'm afraid there's bad news from India. Master Colin—poor little boy—his father is very ill, I'm afraid. I don't quite understand, but we think——'

'I beg your pardon, my lady. Is it anything to do with this? Florence found it, opened like that, in the pocket of Master Colin's everyday pair of knickerbockers.'

Lady Winningham read the cable, read it again, compared it with the one she held, and turned bewildered, almost frightened, eyes upon the nurse.

'But this one must have come before the other one—the one I've got,' she said. 'Who opened it?'

'Master Colin must have done, my lady. And never said a word——'

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'Is the news in the second telegram worse, my lady?'

'It says that Major Winningham is getting weaker, and we must expect——' she choked a little. 'We didn't understand, and Sir Frederick is telephoning now, to Whitehall, to see if they can give us any further particulars. But I *can't* understand——'

She looked at the crumpled telegram again and again.

'This must have come hours ago—before the party. How could he have got hold of it?'

'The children were all over the place, my lady—up and down stairs, watching the men getting things ready. Master Colin might have got to the door and opened it just when the telegram was delivered.'

'But it was addressed—oh, oh, poor little boy! It was only addressed to Winningham. He must have thought it was a cable for his birthday—I see—that's what happened—that's why he opened it.'

'But, excuse me, my lady, why didn't he say anything to anybody? He's quite old enough to understand.'

Nurse was respectfully indignant, but Lady Winningham was only tearful, and unspeakably bewildered.

'I must go up to him——'

'I beg your pardon, my lady, he's asleep. They all are now, even Miss Diana, but Master Colin was asleep before any of them, through not being so excitable as the others.'

'Then I can't wake him,' said Lady Winningham irresolutely. 'It would only upset him. And there may be news in the morning—one way or the other.'

There was no more news in the morning, however, and Lady Winningham was obliged to send for Colin. She was not angry with him—even if his father had not been dying, it was against her principles to be angry with any child—but her gentleness met with very little response.

He did not seem to understand that his father, whom he scarcely remembered, was very ill, and might be going to die. His lack of imagination was absolute.

'But why did not you bring the telegram to me, darling? I quite understand that you opened it by mistake, but you must have known it was important, and that you ought to tell about it.'

Colin began to cry.

She reasoned with him, and petted him, and even spoke severely

to him, but he was sulky and frightened, and would not say a word. At last, in despair, she sent him upstairs again.

Ten minutes later Cynthia came flying down to her mother's room, her lovely mop of hair disordered, her brilliant little face glowing. 'Mummie, may I tell you what I think about Colin? Nurse doesn't understand—nor Mademoiselle, nor any of them—but I think I do.'

'Tell me, precious,' said Lady Winningham. She had great faith in the intuition of this sensitive, intelligent little daughter of hers.

Cynthia put her arms round her mother's neck and whispered earnestly.

'I think Colin opened the telegram about poor Uncle Vivian just before the party, and he did understand what it was, and he thought it would spoil the party and p'raps—p'raps put it off altogether, and that's why he wouldn't say anything. He didn't want all of us to be unhappy—he knew we were looking forward so to the party.'

'My darling! What makes you think that?'

'It's what I'd have done,' said Cynthia, her eyes shining. 'I would, truly, Mummie, if my heart had been breaking—I'd have kept that dreadful telegram all to myself, and let all the others enjoy the party, and even have pretended that I was enjoying it too.'

'My sweet—I believe you would. But if that was it, why didn't poor little Colin come to me as soon as the party was over?'

'Mummie, you know you were with the grown-ups who stayed after we'd gone to bed, and I'm sure he was waiting till you came to say good-night. And you never did.'

'Nurse said you were all asleep—Colin must have gone quickly off to sleep, after all—'

'But Mummie,' said Cynthia quickly, 'he's very little, and one can't always keep awake, even if it's most important, and Colin especially, he's always such a sleepy head—'

'I know,' said Lady Winningham.

She thought, although she did not say so, that Colin's insensitiveness had always been rather remarkable, and that where Cynthia might, as she had just said, have felt her heart to be 'breaking,' Colin was quite capable of falling asleep in mere reaction from an unwonted emotional strain.

She was touched at Cynthia's generous understanding, and inclined to accept her interpretation.

'Poor little Colin!' she said softly. 'It was brave and

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unselfish of him to want everyone else to enjoy the party first . . . although it was a mistake, and I still don't understand why he couldn't explain to me this morning.'

'Mummie, you know Colin never can explain anything,' said Cynthia reproachfully.

That was perfectly true. How clever she was! Lady Winningham kissed Cynthia in silence. In her heart of hearts she could not help feeling that, dreadful though it was to have been entertaining on such a scale while her brother-in-law was dying, it would have been very very difficult to know what to do if the bad news had reached her when it should have reached her, just as the preparations for the party were being completed.

'You do understand about Colin, don't you, Mummie? Because Mademoiselle isn't being a bit nice to him, and she says he has no heart, and that he didn't show the telegram because he didn't want the party to be stopped, and then afterwards he was afraid to tell.'

'I'll speak to her,' said Lady Winningham.

Mademoiselle was always inclined to be hard on Colin. She could not bear what she called his *flegme britannique*. Lady Winningham did not for a moment believe her interpretation to be the true one. She would sooner trust to Cynthia's quick sympathies.

According to Cynthia, little Colin had really been rather heroic. He must have had a dreadful weight on his little mind, all through the festivities . . .

Tender-hearted Lady Winningham found the tears rising into her eyes at the thought of it. She felt as though she had always been unjust to Colin, who had so little imagination, and could not express himself with fire and poetry and clearness, like her own children. And now perhaps she had alienated him, by not understanding or appreciating his self-sacrifice, and he would be less willing than ever to talk to her.

Before she saw Colin again, a third cable had arrived.

Major Vivian Winningham was not going to die. He had turned the corner.

The joy and relief of the good news pervaded the house, and even Mademoiselle kissed Colin—who rubbed his cheek vigorously after the salute—and said nothing more about his having no heart. But Lady Winningham, who, like her children, was highly strung, had worked herself up on Colin's behalf, and she told Mademoiselle and Nurse as well, that they had all of them misunderstood Colin,

and that there were unsuspected depths of bravery and unselfishness in his childish heart.

There came, gradually, to be a feeling throughout the big household in Lowndes Square that this was so. Colin might be less wonderful than were Cynthia and Jeremy and Diana, but he, too, had had his moment—his exalted and inspired moment.

Three months later, Major Wunningham came home on sick leave.

He made friends with his son—an enduring friendship. They resembled one another in many ways, and he never seemed to expect or to desire from Colin enthusiasms and demonstrations that would have been equally alien to them both.

He was, indeed, the only person who ever heard Colin's own version of his behaviour on the day of the party.

'You see, Daddy, I opened the telegram because I thought it was from you, for me on my birthday, like the year before, and when I saw it said you were ill I did think it would mean stopping the party, and that would have been dreadful.'

'Were you so frightfully keen about the party?'

'It wasn't so much that, but there'd have been such a lot of fuss about it, and they—all the others—had been so excited—and everything was ready—men had come all on purpose, to bring the little gold chairs, Daddy, and to arrange the flowers and things—It would have been so dreadful to stop it all.'

'I see what you mean. And certainly it wouldn't have done me any good, as far as that went. But why didn't you tell them afterwards, old man? Aunt Doreen wouldn't have been angry with you, would she?'

'Oh, no, she's never angry.'

'Well, then—'

Colin coloured faintly.

'You see, Daddy, I didn't know you as well then as I do now, did I? And the party was fun, and the conjurer such a very very clever one.'

He gazed up at his father with solemn, trustful eyes.

'I quite and completely forgot all about the telegram, till I woke up next morning,' said Colin.

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THE DIGGERS.

BY KATHARINE KEELING.

THE false dawn had come and gone. A faint glimmer in the east, a lightening in tone if not in texture of the shapeless darkness. Earlier in the night it had been clear, the stars had shone and the lines of the desert were defined, but desert and sky were blurred and indistinguishable in the strange transition between the false and the real dawn. Slowly the east lightened again, more a lessening of the smothering darkness than any actual light, leaving a growing paleness which encroached on and absorbed the surrounding gloom, but still was ghostlike and lifeless and unreal. The air was clammy and the world seemed dead, or rather as if it had never been alive. And then suddenly the miracle—across the glimmering colourlessness a shaft of bright pink, warm and living. Incredible that every night, every hour before dawn, the world should die and cease to be and then be born anew. More shafts of pink and a soft glow warming the sky in the east, dispelling the cold darkness by dividing it in two, the long lines of the desert low on the horizon and the vast heavens growing rosier and more golden with every minute. In the east the line where desert and sky met was like an etching, firm and sure; looking westwards, into what was still night, the shadows seemed to be moving and taking shape. There was an imperceptible lessening of the gloom except for one great mountain of darkness which, instead of dispersing, became more solid and acquired a definite silhouette till even the cloudy summit was clear cut, and in place of an intangible curtain the great burnt-brick Ziggurat in its astonishing massiveness stood outlined. There it was, towering over everything, the work of men's hands thousands of years ago, old in the history of civilised man, very young in the earth's history, but now an integral part of the country which it dominated and inspired. Then the sun rose, and the clear lovely light flowed, a warm comforting stream, over the cold sand, over the east corner of the Ziggurat, beyond the distant faint line of palm-trees marking the bed of the Euphrates, on the black tents not so far distant as the river, and on the men moving slowly towards the Ziggurat.

They came in twos and threes or in larger numbers, the sun

rising behind them, and their muffled figures, for the air was still cold, outlined against the bright sky, heads swathed in their *kufiyehs*, faces covered but for their beaky noses and keen eyes, their *abas* over their heads for greater warmth, their feet bare or wearing sandals of rope, carrying a pick or a spade or a basket, moving with their peculiar freedom of carriage. They had been walking, many of them, for an hour, leaving their tents when it was still dark. Arrived at the Ziggurat the silence was broken, everyone talked and laughed, white teeth flashed, there was a buzz of noise as two hundred Arabs flung down their *abas* and stretched themselves in the bright sunshine after their cold walk. The air was fresh and sparkling, the sun warm and delicious, the sky a lovely soft blue without a cloud, and all around the pale yellow sand, rising and falling over the ancient mounds, sinking beyond them to the general level of the desert.

Ten miles away to the north the green of the palm-trees marking and at the same time hiding the river floated above the early morning mirage, in the north-west isolated mounds clear against the horizon hung between the blue sky and the only less blue mirage, and the Ziggurat itself, seen from a mile away, appeared to float upon a lake in which the light and shade of its brickwork was reflected so naturally it was difficult to remember that for something like two thousand years no water had flowed past its mighty walls. But the men gathered round the Ziggurat wasted no thought on anything so familiar as a mirage, and having flung down their *abas* they divided up into their respective gangs, and to the sound of the foreman's 'To work, to work!' they moved off to their own particular job. Soon half the men were hidden from view, the pick- and spade-men in the deep trenches and holes, only the basket-men who carried the soil away moving steadily to and fro. Seen from the top of the Ziggurat it was a remarkable picture, desert, mirage, and quivering hot air blurring the distant horizon, and at the foot of the Ziggurat the half-excavated trenches, walls and courtyards, the slanting morning rays of the sun throwing everything into bright relief or hard shade, the men's clothes making splashes of colour, the whole a vivid scene of movement, activity, and energy.

A pleasant sight and sound: the cheerful voices, the droning song of the basket-men, the swing of vigorous bodies working with such good will in the crisp morning air. The great Ziggurat in its commanding majesty looked down on the small figures at its feet, and it was difficult to realise that there had ever been a time when

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it had not been there, planted, rooted in the ground. But more than four thousand years ago men, rather different from the ones now working so busily, had carried, brick by brick, mud brick for the great inner core, fine burnt brick for the outer walls, and working under skilled architects had built up the vast mound, of solid brick throughout, its four angles exactly orientated to the cardinal points of the compass. It is known to have been completed in a remarkably short time, thousands of men helping in the building of it, local labour and probably many prisoners, for it was the heyday of the city's fortunes, when it was still an imperial city and its ruler a great conqueror and King of Sumer and Akkad and of the Four Quarters of the World. A fine-sounding title, but not too fine for the man who bore it, who in a reign of about eighteen years built not only the Ziggurat but the great terrace on which it rested and many other buildings beside, and on top of the high mound reached by three staircases of brick placed, like a crown, the most sacred temple of the Moon God.

But temples to gods, however powerful, would not alone have benefited the citizens of the Moon God's city. At that time the River Euphrates flowed within two miles of the west wall of the Ziggurat and a great system of canals connected river and city, irrigating the desert, joining up villages and towns in the surrounding country-side. The king kept the existing canals in good repair, and built a canal connecting the city with the sea, in order, so it is written on a clay cone, that men might grow onions and other vegetables and that ships might come up from the sea to the walls of the city. To a watcher standing near the Moon God's temple it must have been a wonderful sight: the great city with its temples, palaces, streets, houses and shops, surrounded by gardens and vegetation, the wide river, a network of gleaming canals, and small craft and sea-going ships passing from river to town and village and on to the awe-inspiring sea. The very smallest basket-boy must have felt pride in being part of such a grand enterprise, to have helped to build this vast mountain of brick, a symbol of the sacred city's innermost religious life and a sign of its ruler's far-reaching power.

And so it remained, strong as a rock and undisturbed, for about one hundred and fifty years, when the city was taken and the temples destroyed by the Elamites, who came from the Persian uplands. Gone were the days of the city's supremacy, never again was she an imperial city; she became and remained henceforth a vassal state. The Larsa kings, who in turn conquered the conquerors, rebuilt the

city and made it a first-class provincial town, and fortified it against the growing power of Babylon, till in time the Babylonians grew too strong and broke up the Larsa dynasty. Eventually King Kurigalzu began a thorough reconstruction of the city. He levelled the ancient debris, using the footings of the old walls as his foundations, and rebuilt the courts and temples; once again the brick-kilns turned out thousands of bricks; architects, bricklayers, and labourers toiled and sweated, but certainly with cheerfulness, for who would not rather see his sacred temples rebuilt and beautified even by a conqueror than watch the walls crumble and decay and finally disappear?

Kurigalzu's successors were preoccupied with the threat of the Assyrians from the north, who in the end conquered Babylon and established a suzerainty over the whole country; the towns of southern Babylonia changed masters once more, and the Moon God's city was ruled for many generations by a deputy governor from Nineveh. One of these deputy governors, with the astonishing name of Sinbalatsu-ikbi, has left a record written on stone of his restoration of the Moon God's temple, where he put up doors of bronze with bands of silver and lock-plates of gold: for a brief while there was work again for builders, goldsmiths, and silversmiths. But the city was doomed. The river was changing its course, moving farther away, and shipping, commerce, and agriculture were affected. Still this was not quite the end; there was one more period of fictitious glory before she finally sank into oblivion. Nebuchadnezzar restored Babylon to her old supremacy: once more the southern gods were patronised, the revival and bolstering-up of the old gods of the country was part of the Neo-Babylonian policy, and the Moon God's city was rebuilt on a large scale. Nebuchadnezzar's grandson, Nabonidus, an archaeologist and a man of parts, continued his grandfather's work: the Ziggurat was enlarged, its stepped terraces painted black and red, with a blue enamelled tiled temple on its summit, and the whole city must have become one great hive of industry. But no outward splendour, no religious revival, could indefinitely postpone the city's inevitable economic collapse. Its prosperity had rested on its irrigation system, and the river was slowly receding, canals were drying up, and as vegetation shrank the agricultural population grew less, commerce decreased, and what remained was a holy city artificially kept alive. At last Nabonidus was overthrown by the Persians, who brought with them their own religion, and with that the last remaining link was broken

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and the Moon God's city died ; after 400 B.C. she is never heard of again, and her very geographical position was unknown.

Dreaming about the past, one's mind covering thousands of years in a few minutes, the contrast is almost too overwhelming. Nearly two thousand years between the building of the Ziggurat and the coming of the Persians : periods of peace and prosperity followed by violence and destruction, and then long years, sometimes long centuries, of nothingness ; then restless activity again, the renewed influence of the local gods, a very high degree of economic culture, contact with other countries, alternate success and power, and then again overthrow, and finally over two thousand years of oblivion. Looking down on to the mounds and the surrounding desert, waterless and bare of vegetation, the contrast with the past is very poignant—but that is the penalty of knowledge, and to recapture the joyful spirit of expectation you climb down the broken brick steps and watch the workers, who care nothing for the past but do care most desperately for the present. To them this work means regular occupation at regular pay—so much per day and baksheesh for whatever they find in the way of objects. Every Arab is a gambler and prefers the stimulating excitement of the chance of a day of finds or of a blank day to the boredom of knowing that every day's work will be worth so much and no more. And it is not only the baksheesh : all things being equal he probably cares for money as much as most people, but he does care most extraordinarily for the work itself. He likes the certainty that for four months of the year—he probably would find a longer period irksome—he can rely on regular work and regular pay, with the hope of baksheesh ; he likes feeling that he can ask for an advance of his pay and it will be given him, that if he has a cut foot or a pain in his inside, real or imaginary, he will have his wound dressed and receive a pill of many colours, and that he has entire right to all this because he is a member of a gang where all are equal, where it is taken for granted that he too is interested in the progress of the work, where he is treated as a fellow worker however humble his part may be, and where, being a man, he responds to good conditions and fair and friendly treatment.

There is a theory, not altogether ill-founded, that the Arab is exceptionally clumsy with his hands—that for carpentering, tailoring, and work requiring manual dexterity it is advisable to employ a Persian or an Indian. The Persian and Indian craftsmen are certainly very good and skilful, and the Arab cannot compete with

them, but then they are so radically different, and the mentality of the man who can be given a coat to copy and do it meticulously even to the extent of repeating in the new garment the patches in the worn-out model is not necessarily a very masculine type or the sort of mind you would wish to cultivate in a virile people. The Arab, like the rest of us, has the faults of his virtues, but that he is a man rather than a monkey not even his worst detractors would deny. Clumsy, slow with his hands when untaught, yes : but when instructed in a manner adapted to his peculiar needs and made to feel himself part of a living organism and not just a bit of machinery, the wonder is rather at his quick grasp of essentials than at any particular dullness of understanding. Three years ago a pick was a weapon of destruction which was raised above the head and whacked down again : now it is regarded as a most delicate instrument to be held gently but firmly in the hand and used to scratch and tap so carefully that the soil surrounding an invisible object will fall softly away without doing any harm. The men work in gangs : one pick-man who does the actual excavating, one spade-man who shovels the soil into the shallow baskets, and two or three basket-men who carry the laden baskets to the dump or to the trolleys which run on the light railway to a dump farther away. The pick-man is the expert, but that does not mean that the remainder of the gang are less interested. It would not be exaggerating to say that they are absorbed in the work.

Two good gangs were put to dig a trial trench ; they were to dig till they found a hoped-for wall. They dug and they dug, a deep trench where the sun's rays never penetrated and which was soon given the name *Gehennum*—'hell'—by the men. Ten feet, fifteen feet, twenty feet they went down, the air getting rather chilly and gloomy, but hell's temporary inmates remained cheerful. You looked down from the dazzling sunshine into what by contrast seemed a very dark hole. 'Any luck?' 'None, but *Insh'allah* there soon will be!' If Allah wills! Everything was possible if Allah willed ; every smallest success was *Il hamd' ul illah*—Praise be to Allah!—and though they were not conscious of any intensity of feeling when they spoke of Allah, yet the fact that his preoccupation with the smallest happening on the dig was so tacitly assumed tended to strengthen the encouraging belief that the great find was always just within their grasp—if Allah willed. And down in hell, *Insh'allah* and *Il hamd' ul illah* were heard on every side. Not only the pick-men but the spade- and basket-men all had their theories

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about the particular job in hand, and their considered opinion would be discussed and disputed and criticised. A pick-man would cut through the soil with his pick, working carefully and intelligently so as not to miss the almost imperceptible difference between ancient mud and ancient mud brick; it seemed impossible to distinguish the two, they were so alike, and the man would tap gently so that the soil, breaking away, might flake clean from the face of the mud brick wall which it had enveloped and smothered in antiquity. To work along a wall might not tax a man's skill immoderately, but to go down through foot after foot, yard after yard of soil, without finding a trace of any building, down and down, filling thousands of baskets, removing tons of earth—a man might indeed be excused for becoming careless, yet their vigilance never slackened. After something like eighty hours of carrying away soil which had accumulated during thousands of years the keen eyes of the pick-man noticed an infinitesimal change in the colour of the earth, a sign invisible to most men but of meaning to him. A moment or two's extra concentration, the pick almost trembling in his hand, his excitement communicating itself to the gang, and then his shout, '*Il hamd' ul illah*, the wall at last! run and tell the Mudir.'¹ And a breathless figure rushed into the sunshine, his long white garments held up high in one hand, his *kufiyeh* streaming out behind him, his face one beaming smile, calling out 'Where is the Mudir, where is he? We have found the wall!' And the excitement when he arrived, the basket- and spade-men leaning forward crouched on their haunches, whilst the pick-man who found the wall explained how it had all happened. Everyone lit a cigarette, the black camel hair rope which was coiled round their head and kept the *kufiyeh* in place was pushed back and on one side, much as the British workman will push back his cap and scratch his head after doing a good bit of work. Orders were given that they were to go on digging, and the hope held out that perhaps a few feet below the wall an altar might be found with a box buried in it, and in the box there might well be a foundation tablet or a bronze or silver or gold votive offering. Gold! that magic word, suggestive to every Arab mind of vast hidden treasure. With much laughter and goodwill and great speculation about possible gold the men knocked off work for breakfast, whilst the other workers emerged from trenches and holes and put on their *abas* and squatted in small groups and ate their unappetising bits of bread, thickly coated with flies, and drank from

¹ Literally 'governor,' used colloquially as 'gub'nor.'

the great earthen jars fixed into the soil and filled with water which came from ten miles away. The water was brought in kerosine tins, two tins to a minute donkey, and twice a day a convoy of donkeys, rather sore-backed and depressed-looking, in charge of a most lugubrious Arab who seemed to suffer from chronic toothache, so tied up was his head, would wind their way in and out of the mounds, and return, relieved of their burden, just as sadly and disconsolately.

Breakfast over, back go the treasure seekers to their *Gehennum*, whilst the rest of the men begin work again on one of the temples of the Moon God, some working in the courtyard, others digging in the rooms, storehouses, granaries and buildings connected with the temple. The photographer, an Arab boy of nineteen, carrying a huge camera, starts taking photographs, which he does with infinite pains and much success; one of the staff arrives with a drawing-board and tape measure and pole, and takes measurements and notes. The head foreman is everywhere, drawing out on the surface the line of the trench that is to be dug, using the pick himself when any particularly delicate work has to be done, shouting *Yallah! Yallah!* if the men slacken or just to remind them that he is there, his eyes in twenty places at once, his fine native wit like a sharp rapier cutting here, there and everywhere, his sound judgment and his long archæological experience at everyone's call and his supreme interest in the work itself the greatest incentive to the workers. He knows that dullness or monotony acted like a brake on the men's output and on their spirits, and he shows not only great ingenuity but a real understanding of their natures in his methods with them. Arabs, like other simple people, love comic relief, but they are too quick to take offence, too peppery and fierce, and too resentful of being made to look foolish to be good or safe objects for mirth themselves. But there was one who, most providentially, had no sensitive feelings to be lacerated, indeed never was he so completely happy as when he was the centre of good-humoured or ribald attack. Zuweir ibn Muheid was a great hulking negro, like a huge gorilla, big and muscular, with enormous arms which hung down almost to his knees, feet calloused and most ape-like in form, a round bullet head with a low forehead and black woolly hair, a nose almost two inches broad, and thick negroid lips which widened across his whole face into the most stupendous grin. To realise the abyss which separates Africa and Asia you only needed to look at Zuweir: the most pink and white and golden-haired European was nearer in type to the dark-skinned, black-haired Arab than was darker-skinned

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black-haired Zuweir. In Indo-Europeans, whether white or brown, you recognise the common stock from which they are sprung, but if you watch Zuweir's ape-like movements and listen to his jabbering croaky voice it is not so easy to reconcile the accepted fact of a common ancestor at an earlier stage of man's development. But Zuweir is a good Moslem, and does not in any way feel himself to be an alien in the land to which his forebears came as slaves. He wears the most preposterous clothes: a torn and dirty shirt, no drawers, and a grotesque, bright purple, woman's coat, bought with his first week's pay, and tied round the waist with a cord. The coat was not exactly tailor made; it had rather flamboyant trimmings, and a large sailor collar, and this collar was arranged by Zuweir so that he could wear it as a bonnet, and as the weather grew warmer he separated collar and coat and wore nothing but his one shirt and the collar worn as a sunbonnet, which coyly framed his good-natured, hideous face. He was made fun of, accused of doing no work, invited to take on the foreman's job, the simplest and most childish jests; but it cheered everyone, jokes flew backwards and forwards across the field of work, and thus encouraged Zuweir would fling back his head and curl up his lips in a grimace which was meant to imitate a camel and had the most gratifying success every time he performed; it was indeed his only trick, and the others thought it of supreme humour. Then he would raise a spade in the air and start to sing and dance, leaping in the air and coming down again on the flat of his feet, chanting an improvised song, usually 'Will the foreman let us off early?' or 'A favour from the Mudir! we ask a favour from the Mudir!' Up and down bounced Zuweir, the others singing the refrain, and they too would raise their spades or, if they were basket-men, hold their baskets aloft with outstretched arm and dance round and round in a circle, at intervals leaping and stamping and then swooping on again. The elder men with henna-dyed beards took the dancing most seriously, and would shout louder and leap higher than anyone; such would be their fervour and almost frenzy that they would snatch off their *agal* and then their *kufiyeh*, a proof of inordinate excitement, and fling them to the ground, the shaven or bobbed heads looking remarkably naked compared with the meek centre parting and four thick plaits of the younger men. Sometimes on pay day the entire gang would dance and sing the whole way from the field to where the Mudir sat with the foremen, the week's wages piled up in soup plates before him. On a great occasion like this progress would be slow, so often would the

advancing band stop and leap in the air, and there would be ten jumps upward for one jump forward. Arrived at the place of payment, they would separate into two groups, circling round and round, leaping and stamping, and then circling on again, holding aloft in their free hand the sharp dagger each Arab wore bound by a cord round his waist, and one among them, the lightest, most agile, and cat-like of them all, would flourish his gun. After this they would squat in a circle; the foreman would make his weekly joke, 'Let everyone who wishes to cough, cough now and then be silent,' and they would all clear their throats obediently, and receive in alphabetical order their week's pay and baksheesh. Occasionally there would be discussion, not, strangely enough, complaints at being underpaid, which one might have thought would come most familiarly to their lips, but remonstrances for over-payment. The men would take their money and squat down and count it—very slowly, for they were not great mathematicians—then at the end of the payments one might return, pushing back two *annas* and saying, 'I remember the amount you said I should have, and you have given me two *annas* too much.' This happened more than once, and it was usually the men's arithmetic that was at fault, but not till they were quite convinced would they accept their two *annas*. Some only drew a part of their pay, leaving the rest in safe custody, others asked for a week or two weeks' advance if they had some pressing need, payment of blood tax or purchase of a gun or a sheep. After the first week's work everyone bought reed mats, and there was a steady line of men returning from the nearest small town on the Euphrates, each with a long roll of matting on either his or, more often, his wife's head. These mats are used as shelters and dwellings and as floor covering, and the manner of their plaiting has not changed for thousands of years. Long ago it was used as now for roofing, and was put at intervals between the courses of brick work; on the top of the Ziggurat and on the great flight of steps leading up it the crisscross imprint of the reed matting is stamped on the bitumen in which it was laid, gripping the imagination more vividly perhaps because of the very perishableness of the reeds.

The men were pleased by this proof that matting had been used in the same way by those who, if not their ancestors, were yet the earlier inhabitants of the land. It was only natural that the more homely and familiar objects should interest them most. A grinding-stone, a cook-house, an axe-head almost identical with those in use to-day, the imprint on a brick of a man's foot, made when the brick

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was yet soft thousands of years ago, were more comprehensible to them than votive offerings to the gods, terra-cottas buried in the graves, and bricks inscribed in a script they could not read or understand. But if the simpler objects appealed to them more directly they became very interested in the complicated ones, and the more intelligent among the men learnt to distinguish between one inscribed brick and another. They developed a photographic memory, and instead of attempting to remember certain signs, which could only be misleading and confusing, they would recognise an inscription by its dimensions and number of lines and its general impression, and when an inscribed brick was found they would either say 'It is a new one, we do not know it,' or they would say straight away 'It is the same as the one found yesterday in the wall where Mohamed ibn Ali was digging.' A new or rare brick or one where the inscription was particularly well marked meant one or two *annas* baksheesh, and in time their disgust at finding yet another brick of a well-known series, too well known for baksheesh, proved their appreciation of its commercial rather than its scientific value.

But they liked hearing about the inscriptions, and Sinbalatsukibi's door socket, describing the doors of bronze and bands of silver and lock-plates of gold, impressed them enormously. Most of all they liked feeling they were hot on the track of some important find: a small piece of copper would peep out of the soil, a glint of gold leaf shining and new looking as on the day it was beaten into shape, or a fragment of carved stone over which the foreman would hang breathlessly till the Mudir gave permission for it to be touched or removed. And when a particularly heavy fragment had to be lifted and put under cover for treatment the excitement was really intense; everyone would have theories about the best method for handling stones, *abas* would be spread out, and with much singing the stone placed in the centre, the corners twisted and firmly gripped, and as many as twenty men would stagger along with it, a spare man or two accompanying them in case extra help should be required, and there was usually one man who gave loud instructions and shouted more than anyone else, and managed to evade bearing his fair share of the weight, whilst the rest did the real work. Without singing or chanting in chorus no concerted work could be accomplished, and sometimes from unexpected quarters a singing band would appear: a double row of men bearing some heavy object on their shoulders—the light railway being moved to another site. Leading the small procession and picking out the route between

trenches and mounds was a small man, Sa'ad ibn Gati, director of railways, and a very important person indeed. Tiny, well under five foot, with broad shoulders, head and features as sharply modelled as an Assyrian relief of the best period, a fine bold nose and high-spirited nostril, lips cut as if with a chisel, marvellous strong white teeth, a very purposeful beard, well trimmed and following the contour of his chin, deep-set little knowing brown eyes, and the whole of him vibrating with energy. He really knew his job, he was competent and efficient and reliable, and he would take a spade and work harder than any of his underlings—a very unusual phenomenon in the East, where the head man generally contents himself with directing operations. Here was Sa'ad with a metre measure in his hand receiving instructions from the Mudir—the trolleys to start as near as possible to the new excavations and the soil to be dumped along a particular line—asking to have these instructions repeated to make quite certain that he understood them aright, and then trotting away to do the whole thing with no fuss or bother to anyone. A large balaclava helmet pulled over his head when the weather was cold and the strangest garments piled one on top of the other, he did not look ridiculous as he well might have done, for he had too much personality and was too much absorbed in his work. The eye would follow him as he stumped about, his head cocked on one side as he examined the lie of the land and made his plans, and in an incredibly short time he would be moving the rails and sleepers, laying them carefully, repairing them when necessary, and his trolleys would be on the rails and in working order. Only once did he knock off work, when he was attacked by influenza, and then he held on till he could no longer stand on his feet. In a husky voice, his features sunken and pinched looking, and with very sick eyes he asked for a chit to the nearest British doctor: 'I know your pills are good,' he whispered, 'but the *hakim* has a *makina*'—literally a machine—'like a trumpet, and with that he can see right into your chest and knows what is wrong with it!' But after two days he was back on the work; the doctor said he had 'flu, and he had also sprained a muscle in his chest through too much lifting of sleepers—all this he had seen with his *makina*, Sa'ad said—and he was to lie up for a fortnight; but this he refused to do, and only consented to supervise, sitting down on the ground, when he was threatened with the alternative of being sent home. The next pay day he was very obstinate: he had been absent two whole days, 'and I am not satisfied with my work during the remainder of the week, I could

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not work properly, I have not earned the full pay.' If this sounds fantastical, then a bad picture of Sa'ad has been drawn—for there he stood, obstinate and stubborn and not a bit pleased. For days he sat about, a pain in his chest and a nasty cough, and then one morning through the slow-moving crowd trotted a compact little figure: Sa'ad completely recovered, doing everything at the double again, and going about his business in the old excellent way.

He was the only Arab on the work who always moved quickly; the others would run or work at great speed if there was a bet on or one gang was competing against another, but their habitual pace was a slow one. But their slowness was not a ponderous slowness, and compared with most labourers of other races, heavy moving and with awkward gestures, the dignified and finely poised carriage of these Arabs was in itself of arresting beauty. Their stateliness is more than just laziness and acquiescence and the majesty of long robes; they may lose it when in a fury of rage or when telling tales against one another, but they always seem to return to their original ancestral stock of dignity, the common factor of the race. In most of them features and movements are well proportioned and well balanced; they have a fineness of structure, a matter of bone no doubt, an unfaltering poise which is, ultimately, the expression of an absolute naturalness—for they do really possess that unique quality. They are natural and unafraid and fearless, these Arabs who are so cut off from the outside world, whose existence is bounded by their tribe, their small agricultural interests, and their periodical wanderings westwards with their flocks in search of better pasture. During the eight months of the year when no digging is done very few of them do any other regular work, they look after their few sheep and goats and wait for the next season's work. The majority of the men belong to the tribe which owns the grazing rights of the district; their Sheikh rides over from time to time, and inspects the progress of the work, a fine figure in handsome silk robes. The diggers' clothes are not so grand: cotton drawers and a long shirt, when it is cold one old *aba* on top of another, or European women's coats like Zuweir's purple monstrosity, old discarded army tunic coats, like Joseph's, of many colours, all patched and re-patched till the original material is quite obliterated, waistcoats of peculiar design, and sometimes woven pants, Manchester ware, bought in the bazaar, and worn rather surprisingly over various other garments which give a bumpy and absurd outline. But Occidental clothes are mostly worn for warmth, and when the cold weather is over the

flowing white garments and brown *abas* are seen everywhere; an impression in black, brown, and white: black hair, brown skin, white teeth, white garments, brown *abas*, black-and-white *kufiyehs*, with occasional red-and-white ones—a harmony of colour and of movement against the background of dust-coloured walls and blue sky.

Working in gangs, the pick-man would toil hard, and then while the spade-man filled the baskets, he would walk over to another part of the dig to see how things were progressing there, and if a grave or a foundation box or fragment of relief were being uncovered it was astonishing how many of the pick-men and spade-men would drift across to the scene of interest, and on very important occasions Sa'ad would leave his railway and inspect with solemnity the new find.

The pick-men could distinguish between ancient whitewash and salt incrustation, which requires experience and some judgment; they could see the outline of an unbaked tablet hidden in the soil when quite observant European eyes would have passed it by; but not all the gang were equally intelligent—more than half were basket-men, and these were, for the most part, very stupid and not teachable beyond a certain point. A good proportion were old men, and these would walk backwards and forwards mechanically, and they would pick up most pathetically the same bit of broken pot, discarded and thrown away times out of number, in the hope the Mudir would reward them with a large baksheesh. It was not that they were not in their own limited way interested in the work, but they were just unable and too old to learn; and to hear one pick-man say to another, 'Why, even a basket-man would have understood *that!*' was in the nature of an insult. There were varying degrees of intelligence among the pick-men, but if the three hierarchies, the diggers, the foremen and the staff had been asked to name the keenest and most hardworking among them, all three would have voted for Daham ibn Muhaisin. Daham was remarkable for his personality, not for his looks; at first sight he would pass unnoticed among his fellows, for he had no beauty. He was of medium height, small boned and wiry, his face pock-marked, his hair, two inches long, straggling from under his red-and-white *kufiyeh*. He always looked rather untidy, clad in the same white garment, his waist very small, a cord wound tightly round it holding his dagger in place. When the men did a dance it was he who, slow to rouse, would at last leap into the midst of them, quick and agile like a cat, his gun held above his head. Guns were not allowed on the work

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VOL. LX

except for those carried by the guard, but special leave was given to Daham, because he had lately killed a man, and it would have been dangerous for him to have been unarmed. Daham had very soft and gentle ways, and he would roll up his gun in his *aba* and place it carefully on the ground beside him as if it were a live baby and he its watchful nurse. He was both very sensitive and very fierce; he least of all men could be driven, but he would have worked day and night to finish a job entrusted to him, and his interest in the work was always more vivid and intense than that of the others. For actual quantity of output he worked at least fifty per cent. harder than anyone else. To watch his delicate body tauten in every muscle and then leap on to his spade, if he happened to be lending a hand with the spade work, or crouching, smothered in sand and falling soil, working with his pick, never looking up or allowing himself to be distracted, his funny little face wet with sweat, was to see the symbol of concentration in Arab dress. When there was a bet on and one gang was competing against another, Daham always won, not that his men were quicker but because he himself worked like a whirling cyclone and inspired the most pedestrian of them. No one stopped for food or for rest, but all day long men would sing and shout, *kufiyehs* flung on the ground, *abas* instead of the usual baskets filled with soil and hoisted on to a man's back, everyone running in frantic excitement. This method could only be employed when there were tons of soil to move and no question of finding buildings or objects. At last Daham, at two in the afternoon, his portion of the work accomplished, the last *aba* full of soil carried away, the ground swept clean with a brush, his face streaming, his clothes clinging to his wet body, would fling himself on his back, to rest for the first time in eight hours, and having rested and had some food would pick up his gun and trudge off happily for home, his gang's reputation as record workers once more proved, and pleased as Punch at being let off work two hours early after having done a two days' job since morning. But if he was at work on a difficult and delicate piece of work, then let everyone beware: he would sit, a grumpy little figure, ready to leap up with murder in his eyes if he were jostled or interfered with, and would dance with rage, his legs rigid like a fencer, his teeth bared. He was affectionate like a child and equally sincere, and he had many disarming childish ways, though he was ignorant of much that the ordinary child knows. Digging at the corner of the great courtyard in the hope of finding a foundation deposit, he watched with great interest

a prismatic compass being used, and asked timidly whether the finger pointed to where the treasure lay hidden, and was not really satisfied with the explanation given him. If the stethoscope, as Sa'ad assured him, could see into a man's chest, surely the compass could do the same with the treasure hidden mysteriously in the soil.

Daham's noblest deed, done in the interests of a man he despised as a bad worker, was when he supported Khleif ibn Jubeir in his plea to be re-admitted into the gang. Khleif was the only unsatisfactory pick-man, and when he deliberately disobeyed the foreman he was told to go. Then it was that Daham and one or two others, all very sheepish-looking, accompanied Khleif when he made his appeal. The Mudir said No, it was a most serious offence in his eyes. So Khleif with great cunning joined the foremen who were awaiting their mid-day meal, squatted at a respectful distance from them, thereby thoroughly embarrassing them, for he well knew that they would feel obliged to offer him of their food, and as their guest he would have a certain claim on them, and if he subsequently begged the foremen to intervene on his behalf it would be difficult, according to Arab custom, for the foremen to refuse. It was a delicate situation, and it was saved by help from an unexpected quarter. With the exception of the negro Zuweir, the only other non-Arab employed was the cook, an Indian, equipped by nature with the qualities which go to the making of a very good cook rather than of an unexceptionable hero. The others would say of him, 'He is only a poor creature, but he can cook'; nor would he have felt himself insulted by this universal criticism except on those occasions, none too rare, when he had access to the brandy he loved and which always proved his undoing. At such times he forgot he was a poor little creature with a squeaky little pipe, and he was even heard to declaim in a voice of thunder that he, a British officer, would shoot the wicked house boy. But on the day of the Khleif *débâcle* he was sober, and therefore relied on his pre-eminence as a cook rather than as a marksman to dispose of the enemy. There sat the foremen, thoroughly annoyed and yet not knowing how to avoid Khleif's importunities; there squatted Khleif, knowing he would soon be offered good food, his hosts obliged to listen to what he had to say; there was the steaming dish sent by the cook. The unwelcome guest was asked to help himself first, and with a smile he plunged his hand into the dish and then to his mouth: there was a splutter, and then he choked and choked and choked, till he leapt to his feet in agony, tried to draw a breath, went on choking till,

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with one roar of rage, he rushed away from his politely amused hosts. The dish was removed, the same food, but unpeppered, was placed on the ground before the foremen, and the cook presented himself to receive the applause he justly felt was his due.

How often that tale was told ! Again and again the men would beg to hear it and delight in its re-telling. No Arab would tell you Queen Anne was dead : to them a story becomes more absorbing and really more exciting with every hearing, and their appreciation of it depends not on its novelty or unexpectedness but on its original place in their affections and its associations. The head foreman's jokes and tales were particularly enjoyed ; he would take a familiar phrase and twist it so as to give it a different meaning, which was considered exceptionally clever, and even his cry to the men, ' Wake up you idle ones, you sleepy ones, you corpses ! ' was always greeted with an outburst of spontaneous laughter, most delightful to hear, and with renewed energy on every side. And on the last day, when, after the grandest performance, the dancers sat in a ring for their last payment and all money matters were settled, and those who had banked with the Mudir drew out their balance and the men paid off their debts to one another, the foreman made his last great speech when Daham received the equivalent of £1 in rupees, sent from England as a reward for the season's best worker. ' You see how people in London know when good work is being done here ! When bad work is done London hears of that too ! Let everyone work next season so that all may receive presents from London ! ' Every face beamed ; it was good to hear next season's work spoken of with such certainty, and to know at parting that before the year was over everyone would be back again at his job ; it was nice to be told that living in that mythical place London were people so interested in what was happening on the work that they sent tangible proof of their interest. It would be hard to say what they imagined London and its inhabitants to be like, people who, if the foreman was correct, knew whether each individual worked well or ill. But the Mudir came from London, and that would explain London's friendly attitude. Had not the foreman said very truly, ' The Mudir, he asks no questions, he does not need to ask, he knows the truth ! ' not only about the secrets hidden in the soil but in men's hearts. Well, that was true too ; they had proved it in the last three years. When they went to say goodbye to the Mudir he was arranging the fragments of the stela they had helped to find ; each man told the others which bit he was responsible for, and then they

wanted to hear all about it again. There was the portrait of the King who had built the Ziggurat and whose bricks they could all recognise, the King carrying symbolically a pick and basket, compass and bitumen-leveller; there were the other fragments actually showing the brick walls of the Ziggurat, with men building them and basket-men at work. 'They were like us!' said Daham, making a discovery, and they all looked at the Mudir, who nodded back. 'And there is the Moon God sailing over his city,' said the foreman, pointing a dramatic hand, and every face was turned to where, in the brilliant afternoon light, the young crescent moon floated over the Ziggurat. For one moment the faces were blank, and then they burst into smiles and finally into chuckles of laughter. The foreman had ended the season with a new joke, to be repeated through the hot summer months, repeated and enjoyed; and next season, when they all met again, it would not be forgotten in that happy re-union of old friends and old jokes.

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BRIGHTER LONDON.

BY LAURENCE KIRK.

It is many years since some producer of revues had the brilliant idea of cutting down his expenses by the simple process of making his audience entertain themselves. It was a good idea, and like most good ideas it was promptly snapped up, developed and improved. The audience at first were not expected to do more than join in the choruses of catchy songs, but as the revue became more intimate, they soon went one better than that. Platforms were strewn about the stalls, and a stream of dainty fairies flitted in and out of the audience at an interesting angle above their heads: there would be an unseemly struggle for favours tossed down from the fair hand of the leading lady, and then when she had no more favours to give, she would pick out some respectable old man, have the limelight turned on to the dome of his bald head and proceed to embarrass him with some endearing song. A little too jolly intimate for him, I should think! But he dare not complain, and the rest of the audience loved it.

This sort of thing—thank heaven—has now rather gone out of fashion in the theatres. But, what is worse, it has distinctly caught on in restaurants and places where they eat. If you drop into a restaurant for a quiet meal in the evening, you are always in danger of finding yourself involved in a gala night and expected to wear a paper cap, throw things about, and generally contribute to the brightness of London. That happened to me only a week ago, and as the restaurant in question promptly stopped having gala nights after this particular evening, I think the incident is worth recording.

The 'Climax' is a restaurant which I used to frequent before the war. It is just off Coventry Street, along the fourth turning to the left as you go towards Leicester Square. It was a quiet place when I used to know it: very English: not very good food and not very good wine. I really do not know why I used to go there. Nor do I know what prompted me to return after so many years. It was just one of those sudden foolish impulses that come upon one. After walking down Regent Street I had become a

little depressed at seeing the old London that I knew actually disappearing before my eyes, and the desire came to me to visit some quiet corner which was still the same. That is how the 'Climax' came into my mind. I went home, changed, and walked leisurely up Piccadilly, just as I used to do in the old days.

The 'Climax,' by Jove! I had misgivings as soon as I got to the door; for the door was like the entrance to a burning, fiery furnace—an absolute blaze of light. I was nearly dazzled by the buttons on the two immense commissionaires who stood on either side of the door saluting, while a stream of expensively clothed people wound its way slowly inside. The 'Climax' had gone up in the world since I knew it! However, I went inside. I proceeded in a dazed manner through a strange vestibule, amongst a crowd of strange, noisy people to a strange cloak-room: then I found a strange *maitre d'hôtel* and asked diffidently for a table. I might have been Oliver Twist asking for more, to judge from his expression.

'A table, Monsieur!' he exclaimed. 'Monsieur surely is aware that every table, even the smallest, has been engaged since six weeks.'

'No, I—I wasn't aware,' I said in a tone implying that my education had been neglected.

I was about to withdraw as gracefully as I could when he bid me wait, and conversed in some harsh, rapid, foreign tongue with one of his subordinates. Then he turned to me again. I was indeed fortunate, he told me; it so happened that a table for one had just been countermanded and, though there were others waiting, nevertheless he would give it to me. I thanked him and he graciously waved me away while a waiter led me through the immense room to a diminutive table at the side. The table was one of the smallest things I have ever seen. I felt grossly large compared with it. However, it was beautifully decorated with flowers in a gilt pot, spotless cutlery, and a delicately shaded table lamp which went out every time anybody passed my chair.

I had a good view of the room from this corner, and when my eyes had got accustomed to the glare (for the shaded lamps were mere glow-worms under the tropical sun above) I looked up and examined it. It was ten times the size of the old dining room, lavishly decorated, with gorgeous thick carpets, dazzling white damask, and brilliant cutlery. There was a band playing at the far end, playing well, if a little loud; then the music stopped and

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the eccentric conductor was bowing for his applause. All the time a stream of people kept entering the room and passing slowly and superbly to their tables: it was a parade of the most expensive gowns and priceless furs in London. Yes, expensive! Everything I saw pointed to the greatest luxury, and I wondered uneasily how much my dinner was going to cost.

It struck me that though the room was already more than half full, yet no one was eating. There were cocktails in plenty, but no food. It seemed that there was a general air of expectancy about the room, and as no one came to inquire whether I wanted to eat anything, I gathered that I was waiting for something important to happen. Eventually I called a waiter and asked:

'What's on to-night?'

He looked at me in great surprise without answering.

'What's on?' I repeated.

'It's the great Gala Night, sir, of course.'

'Yes, well, what's that?'

The waiter, at last convinced that I was not trying to be funny at his expense, condescended to explain. It was, as everybody knew, the night of the Great Pearl Supper. The most astounding novelty that the enterprising 'Climax' had yet ventured. Oysters were to be served, and amongst those oysters there were three pearl oysters. The pearls were valued at 100 guineas, 150 guineas, and 250 guineas. He then indicated to me, at the far end of the room, an immense side board upon which were stacked tray upon tray of oyster shells.

With this information he left me, and I was wondering which of the pearls was to be mine when my attention was attracted, by my table lamp going out, to the fact that more people were coming in. The party in question was the first in the room which I knew even by sight. They sat down at the table just in front of mine. The hostess was Mrs. Ikey Williams, and she had her husband with her and two other couples. I did not know Mrs. Ikey, though, like most other people, I knew of her. . . . A curious mixture of names, Ikey and Williams! The fact is that when she married Ikey Freundheim, she stipulated that not only should she change her name, but that he should also change his: it was easy enough to alter Freundheim to Williams by letters patent, but there was no edict, proclamation or decree which could prevent people still referring to her as Mrs. Ikey; and so Mrs. Ikey she unwillingly remained. I wondered, judging by the rows of pearls which adorned

her ample throat, why she should bother to compete for one more in this way. But she was like that, as poor Ikey knew well! I did not recognise the rest of the party, but I gathered from the way in which the girl in the plain blue frock was harshly told to 'sit there,' that she must be a poor relation up from the country.

Next moment I was interrupted in the study of my neighbours by the sudden hideous shriek of a trumpet: and a few seconds later a shiny little man was standing in the middle of the room speaking in suave tones. He was explaining what was going to happen. The first thing he said was that men were not eligible for the pearls, so my hopes were dashed to the ground at the very outset: I could have oysters all right, but they would be ordinary oysters served in the ordinary way—no doubt at rather more than the ordinary price, though he did not mention that. He then got down to business. The 100-guinea pearl would be amongst the first half dozen oysters served to the fair sex, the 150-guinea pearl amongst the second, and the superb 250-guinea one amongst the third. So eighteen oysters had to be swallowed before there was any hope of the superb pearl: rather a formidable prospect, though I must say most of them looked as though they could do it. But he was still talking. It had been suggested, he said, that the management would arrange to serve the pearls to their best clients: they would like to do so, of course, but they had taken every precaution to ensure that the pearls should be allotted purely by chance. The waiters would form a procession, and would keep moving as long as the music lasted. Then, as soon as the music stopped, they would stand still and the oysters would be served to the nearest diners. This item was applauded. He then ended up with a little joke.

'I need not detain you longer,' he smirked, 'unless it is to implore you to examine the oysters before eating them. A pearl in the hand is worth two in the—— but, you understand!'

He bowed, smiled and withdrew.

After that the ceremony began. I call it a ceremony for lack of a better word: it was really a cross between a children's party and a royal procession. The management intended, if anything, to out-do the dignity of a royal procession, but somehow or another they failed.

The band struck up the 'Robbers' March' of *Chu Chin Chow*—a curious selection, I thought—and the waiters solemnly paraded with a tray on each uplifted hand. It was a long time before the

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music stopped, and the excitement became intense. Then, clash!—it ended. One waiter stopped so suddenly that he dropped one of his trays; that rather spoilt the effect and incidentally lost him his job. However, everyone was so engrossed examining their oysters that the incident passed almost unnoticed. There was a hush—one exclamation of disappointment—then a nervous giggle of joy. A rather flamboyant young lady at the other side of the room was the lucky one. There was applause—congratulations—then a decent interval was allowed for the disposal of the unsuccessful oysters. I, in the meantime, was served with my half dozen, and I could not resist the temptation of looking under each one of them, just in case someone had made a mistake.

Then a gong sounded, and the whole proceeding began again. This time the 'Robbers' gave way to a jaunty air out of Gilbert and Sullivan, and the waiters went through the same solemn procession—except, of course, the unfortunate individual who had dropped the tray; he had already been cast forth into the outer darkness, never to return. Clash! A pause. Silence. No, not silence this time. One waiter had stopped midway between two ladies, both of whom had an intuitive feeling that the pearl was in the tray on his right hand. There was a politely bitter word. The unfortunate men who belonged to the two ladies were unwillingly forced to support their claims; and it became necessary for the *maitre d'hôtel* to intervene. He was a little marvel, the *maitre d'hôtel*. He could settle differences that would have baffled Solomon. And with a suavity! But his suavity was wasted on this occasion, for before he had time to deliver judgment there was a startled little exclamation from Mrs. Ikey's table. I glanced up and saw the poor relation looking in ecstatic wonderment at the pearl which she held in the hollow of her right hand. It was not, however, the look of unbelieving joy on her countenance that struck me, but rather the ominous frown which contracted the features of Mrs. Ikey. It seemed to me that the country cousin would be lucky if she got back to the country without leaving her precious prize behind.

Applause—congratulations—and the buzz of general conversation.

This time there was a longer pause. Partly, I suppose, because twelve oysters take longer to digest than six, and partly because it was necessary to create an atmosphere of suspense before the great event of the evening. At last the music started, and this time it

was nothing less than the 'Wedding March' itself. The procession lasted double as long as the previous ones, and excitement was at fever pitch. So tense was the anxiety that I saw more than one glass of champagne lifted with shaking hand to trembling lips; and powder and lip-stick were freely used to counter the damaging effect of suspense upon the complexion. Then, just as we thought the music would never stop—clash—it ceased abruptly. A pause—silence—more silence—and more silence. An hysterical laugh, and silence once more. Something had gone wrong. Every oyster had been examined, some even been eaten, and the pearl was missing.

The *maitre d'hôtel* glanced at the manager, and the manager himself came forward to investigate. There had been a sudden outburst of excited comment at the non-appearance of the pearl, but now, as the manager came slowly forward, there was complete silence once more. He went straight to the sideboard, looked at the number on a ticket there, and called for the waiter with the corresponding number. The waiter in question was standing just in front of me. He went forward with the walk of a condemned criminal, then returned to my corner of the room with the manager, the *maitre d'hôtel*, and all the assistant *maitres d'hôtel*. The tray on his left hand had been given to a lady in green behind me. The tray was examined and discarded. It was not the one. The tray on his right hand had been given to Mrs. Ikey herself: it was in front of her now, and on it were six empty oyster shells.

The manager identified the tray by a mark on the rim; he then addressed Mrs. Ikey amidst a frightful hush of excitement.

'But, Madam, the pearl was on this plate, and see—in this shell.' He indicated a further mark.

I was watching intently. I saw Mrs. Ikey open her mouth to reply. Then before a word escaped her, a sudden devastating look, as though it were the dawn of doubt, appeared on her features, and before anyone could speak or move, she fainted.

Confusion is the only thing I remember after that. Waiters rushed hither and thither; those who wanted to see impeded those who were trying to help, and it was minutes before order was re-established. The limp form of Mrs. Ikey was then removed, and many of the diners left at the same time without waiting for further entertainment. Those who remained finished their meal in a subdued and uncomfortable silence. The evening emphatically had not been a success.

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That was not the end of the matter, however; not by any means. The papers got hold of the affair, and I was able to follow in print the story which I had seen begun in person. The Press had not had such a windfall since the last murder at Byfleet, and they gloried in their luck. There were photographs, interviews, and experts debated as to what exactly had become of the pearl. And the headlines! And the posters! The very morning after the incident I saw a poster printed in black type with 'Peer's Mother-in-law Swallows Pearl.'

Ikey, in the meantime, went to see his solicitors; the 'Climax' saw theirs, and there was every prospect of a *cause célèbre*. Mrs. Ikey, on the other hand, was confined to bed and saw no one except her doctor. The doctor was puzzled and called in another doctor; the other doctor called in a surgeon, and the surgeon an X-ray expert. The expert took a photograph, several photographs, and the world waited with tense anxiety to hear the verdict. Yes, sure enough, the photograph showed a little, round, dark shadow which ought not to have been there. The pearl was undoubtedly located, lodged in some obscure cavity in Mrs. Ikey's inside, to which they gave a discreet medical name.

Poor Mrs. Ikey was for it. The surgeon called in an assistant surgeon and two anæsthetists; and Mrs. Ikey's nice warm boudoir was transformed into the chilly cleanliness of an operating room. Ikey protested. Was it necessary? Why should not his wife wear pearls inside as well as out? But the surgeon was severe, spoke to him about taking responsibility for his wife's life, and Ikey had to give way. Poor Ikey! His house was filled with stern surgeons and sterner nurses, and there was not a corner left for him to rest his weary head. At last, when the dreaded moment arrived, he was seen sitting on the stairs looking the picture of misery, while dreadful things were happening behind the closed door on the next landing. He could hear subdued noises within, a man's curt tone, a woman's footfall, and then silence. Ikey shuddered. Supposing anything should happen? Supposing—supposing they did not find the pearl?

Centuries afterwards the door opened and someone came out. Ikey wearily looked up. It was the surgeon, clad like the Grand Wizard of Ku-Klux-Klan in his white operating robes. A stern, severe figure! But not quite so stern as usual, for he appeared to be suffering considerable mental agitation as he turned and addressed Ikey. He held something in the hollow of his hand.

'I'm afraid it's only a bit of one of her own teeth.' His voice was gloomy.

Ikey was beside himself. He wanted to fly at the man, kick him, bite him. But after an angry gulp he restrained himself.

'She ain't got any teeth of her own,' he snapped.

'My dear sir,' the surgeon replied coldly, 'I recognise it as a human tooth. It must therefore be one of her own teeth—even if it has been—er, where it was, for years.'

'Well'—Ikey adopted a truculent attitude—'what are you going to do about it, any'ow? I employed you to find the pearl. A tooth, eh? What's the good of that to me. You're a fraud, sir, that's what you are!'

'Mr. Williams, please calm yourself.' The surgeon was haughty. 'Remember your wife lying there——'

'Lying there! Yes!' Ikey flashed. 'Then, damn it, take her appendix out—I will 'ave something done!'

Thus poor Mrs. Ikey lost her appendix. . . . But it all ended happily. The first thing she saw when she wearily lifted her eyes under the weight of the waning anæsthetic, was the beautiful 250-guinea pearl. She smiled contentedly, smiled and dropped back again into peaceful oblivion. It was not until several days after that they told her that the pearl had been retrieved, not by the surgeon, but by Scotland Yard, who, after days of quiet and diligent work, had been rewarded by the arrest of the waiter who abstracted the pearl before giving the oysters to Mrs. Ikey.

It was a fine pearl. It may have been worth 250 guineas, and it may not. In any case it cost Ikey something in the neighbourhood of five hundred pounds before he had finished with surgeons' and lawyers' fees.

Ikey goes to a jeweller now when he wants to get pearls for his wife.

And the 'Climax' have given up the practice of holding Gala Nights.

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TEN YEARS AFTER :
THE BATTLE OF JUTLAND OR
LITTLE FISHER BANK

This account of the battle, considered by high authority to be the best which had come to hand, was written at home in June, 1916, by a midshipman in H.M.S. Barham, from notes taken during the action. The Naval Censor vetoed immediate publication : it only appears on the tenth anniversary of the fight.


THE first intimation I had that something was doing was when, returning from a tea-party with some ladies ashore, strangely reminiscent of the Duchess of Richmond's ball, I saw the recall, and the signal to raise steam with the utmost dispatch, flying from the signal yard of the *Lion*, Admiral Beatty's flagship. This was on Tuesday, May 30, a beautiful day, with the sea calm and the barometer rising. I had no reason to suspect the action which was to follow, since we had frequently had similar alarms without anything serious coming of them, and our disappointments in this respect had been so many that we would none of us believe in the prospect of an action till we were actually in sight of the enemy. By eleven o'clock, Greenwich time, the fleet at this base were under way and steaming east at twenty knots. In the course of this narrative the time will be Greenwich mean, as this is what the clocks on board were showing.

The fleet under Vice-Admiral Sir David Beatty consisted of : *Lion* [1], *Tiger*, *Queen Mary*, *Princess Royal*, which constitute the First Battle-Cruiser Squadron, hereinafter referred to as the 1st B.C.S. ; the *New Zealand* and *Indefatigable*, which constitute the Second Battle-Cruiser Squadron (2nd B.C.S.), and the *Barham* [2], flying the flag of Rear-Admiral Hugh Evan-Thomas ; *Malaya*, *Valiant*, and *Warspite*, which constitute the Fifth Battle Squadron (5th B.S.) ; a number of light cruisers and destroyer flotillas, and an aeroplane ship for escorting and screening, made up the remainder.

The night was calm and fine, but there was no moon. We were once or twice attacked unsuccessfully by submarines, but otherwise nothing eventful occurred.

In the morning, as we were reaching the danger area near the

German coast, we prepared ship for immediate action. All wood-work and paint and inflammable liquids were got under armour, the upper deck was cleared of all obstacles in the way of the guns, booms and boats were lashed up, and everything got ready for action at short notice. Six months ago this would have thrilled us to the core, but we had done it several times before—in fact, on every occasion on which we came into the danger area near the German coast, and now it left us comparatively unmoved.

We were steering a zigzag course in an easterly direction till the following afternoon, and by half-past three must have been well within a hundred miles of the Danish coast off Jutland. Meanwhile, the Grand Fleet, consisting of three powerful squadrons of Dreadnoughts and super-Dreadnoughts, and, I believe, the oldest squadron of battle-cruisers, consisting of *Invincible* , flying the flag of Rear-Admiral Hon. Horace Hood, *Indomitable*, and *Inflexible* (3rd B.C.S.), and a large number of light cruisers, armoured cruisers, and destroyers, under the supreme command of Admiral Sir John Jellicoe, were steaming from their base at their full speed (about twenty knots) in a south-easterly direction, and were at this time about a hundred miles to the north of Admiral Beatty's fleet.

Each of these fleets had a crescent-shaped screen ahead of them of light cruisers and destroyers. It was this screen of Beatty's squadrons that first sighted the enemy. At 3.50 p.m. these reported enemy light cruisers and destroyers bearing north-east, steering north-west.

It is important to remember that at this time the sea was glassy, and the sun as yet undimmed by cloud or mist. At five minutes to four the rising notes of the 'action' bugle rang through the ship. The officers waking from their afternoon slumbers got up lazily, and, thinking it was the usual 'exercise action' bugle (similar to the action, but with additional notes at each end), prepared to go to their quarters. A second call, and the clear voice of the call-boys and bos'n's mates piping 'Hands to action stations, close watertight doors,' precluded all further doubt. I think that the most unimaginative of us could not but feel a thrill run through him as this long-hoped-for moment arrived. Was it indeed 'Der Tag' at last? The ship was already cleared for action, and in an incredibly short space of time all hands were at their action stations, instruments tested, and everything in readiness to open fire. I was in the foretop, and now found time to look around and see the movements of the fleet.

We were leading the 5th B.S. in line ahead. The *Lion* (six

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miles distant), on the starboard beam, was leading the battle-cruisers, also in line ahead. All the destroyers and light cruisers not actually needed to protect us from submarines could be seen in orderly formation scurrying at full speed away across our front from right to left to grapple with the advancing enemy. The 1st B.C.S. and 2nd B.C.S. at their full speed, twenty-seven or twenty-eight knots, were doing the same thing. We continued, I think, on the same course, and increased to twenty-five knots gradually, as quickly as we could get up the steam. We had always longed for the moment for the Admiral to hoist the signal for the squadron to steam at twenty-five knots, and show the rest of the fleet what we could do, as the other battle squadrons, whether from jealousy or ignorance, were very sceptical of our ability to steam at their speed. But better was to come. 'Admiral intends to proceed at full speed' was the next signal fluttering from the yard-arm. Right royally the squadron responded, and twenty-five and a half knots was reached.

Meanwhile, we were eagerly looking out for the enemy. The battle-cruisers, which by this time were almost right ahead, were seen to open fire with their starboard side guns. Up to this time we had been profoundly sceptical as to the chances of a general action, and a 'scrap' with light cruisers was the most we really expected. Soon after the battle-cruisers opened fire we saw smoke in the direction of their fire, and brought the guns to the 'ready' position. A minute later the enemy's masts could be made out, and all our range-finders were laid on the enemy. A mean range was taken, and the Captain gave the order 'Commence.' At the same time a flag was run up to the topmast yard-arm, telling the rest of the squadron to open fire. Enemy was the leader of two or three light cruisers of the *Stettin* class—three tall funnels, similar to the *Emden*.

'Fire.' The ship shook as the eight fifteen-inch guns we carry, at nearly full elevation, discharged as one contribution to the enemy. They make quite a good din, but with ear protectors the noise is really very little. It is horrible waiting for the first gun, but after that one gets quite used to it. We were firing at about twelve miles, and it was very hard luck on a poor little light cruiser to be attacked by fifteen-inch gun ships, without even the consolation of being able to reply to it. I felt so sorry for them. However, our unwelcome attentions were soon discontinued for a very good reason. The *Lion* was flashing a searchlight shutter at us at a great rate. 'Enemy battle-cruisers in sight bearing NE.,

steering NW.', was the message that came through. This went through the ship like wildfire, and cheers and the buzz of excited conversation could have been heard everywhere. The Boches meant business at last. Our course at this time must have been about ESE. The battle-cruisers were turning in succession twelve points to starboard, thus bringing the enemy within the extreme port-bow training of all their guns. In a few minutes our battle-cruisers, now about four miles ahead, were opening fire on the enemy battle-cruisers, and the enemy were replying to their fire. A little later we also opened fire on them, and the Germans turned sixteen points together (right round).

Our fire was directed against their rearmost battle-cruiser, which had previously been leading the line. I think this was the *Lützow*, but I am not sure. The object of this manœuvre seemed to be that of drawing our comparatively small squadrons into their High Sea Fleet, and so overwhelming us. That this might be so Beatty was, naturally, well aware; and it is possible that this trap was the Germans' object in going to sea. They thought their battle-cruisers were a bait the British would be bound to swallow. We did swallow. What the Germans did not know was that our fish was a bait to catch a still bigger fish, and once taken, it would be difficult to let go. Beatty knew the odds. He knew the possible extent of the sacrifices his squadrons and ours might have to make. Yet he judged it worth while, and he was right.

Soon after this our battle-cruisers came under the fire of the third division of their High Sea Fleet and decreased to twenty-three knots. This is their most powerful squadron, consisting of four of the *Kaiser* class, four *Koenig* class, and with them, possibly, was their fleet flagship, *Kaiser Friedrich der Grosse* (*Kaiser* class), flying the flag of Admiral von Scheer, and the *Hindenburg*, which had, I think, twelve-inch or fourteen-inch guns. Meanwhile our fire was proceeding satisfactorily. Soon after opening fire I saw three tremendous splashes thrown into the air, perhaps a hundred feet, circles of churned-up water, and a noise that I can only describe as the probable effect of 'Stentor' trying to shout 'Plonk' under water; it may sound fanciful, but it is the best I can do. It was a noise similar to that of the ship astern firing her big guns. I was very much disappointed with the splashes made by the shells of the enemy, which we had expected to be immense and to raise almost a wall of water into the foretop, but actually they scarcely ever rose as high as the mast. Somehow it had not struck me that

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the enemy would fire back at us, though of course I must really have known it. I found myself wondering how soon they would hit us, but after this it became monotonous, and I cannot say I thought any more about it. I saw at this time that one or two of our battle-cruisers appeared to be the especial target of the German guns, though their firing seemed to be as rapid as ever. They had been hit several times. Suddenly there was a terrific explosion in the fore-magazine of one of the battle-cruisers, which I made out to be either the *New Zealand* or *Indefatigable*.¹ A tongue of red flame shot up through an immense cloud of yellow-grey smoke. She dived down by the bow, and almost immediately the after-magazine too blew up. When the pall of smoke had cleared away, a quantity of oil of an area perhaps as big as Trafalgar Square and a few pieces of wreckage were all that was left to be seen of the poor ship which had so recently been the home of a thousand of the King's officers and men. I searched this area with powerful glasses, but could see no sign of survivors. This catastrophe was appalling in its suddenness, but though many good men and true, some of them intimate friends, had perished, it was obvious that the only way to continue fighting efficiently was to force the incident from our minds and concentrate on the business in hand. A second catastrophe followed very shortly afterwards. Another battle-cruiser, either *Queen Mary* or *Princess Royal*,¹ shared the fate of the *Indefatigable*, though in her case the fore-magazine only blew up, and a number of men were saved by one of our destroyers, and later, by those of the enemy, who steamed on the same ground. All our light cruisers and destroyers had by this time taken up their stations on the disengaged side of the line. We had to keep a sharp look-out for submarines, floating mines, and aircraft. In this connexion I would like to mention that all the newspapers say that Zeppelins were present, and did great damage by dropping bombs; but I myself—and I think I am right in saying the rest of the squadron also—saw no sign of hostile aircraft of any description throughout the battle. I saw two floating mines, and one of our aeroplanes did go up, which I saw return to its parent ship at the commencement of the action.

By this time (about 5.30 P.M.) it was obviously too hot for our battle-cruisers, which are very lightly protected and not intended to engage a superior force of battleships, from which some shot was bound, sooner or later, to explode near the magazine, and the flash

¹ The two ships lost were *Indefatigable* and *Queen Mary*.

of a shell may carry a long way. They turned in succession sixteen points to port (right about) and passed between us and the enemy, to all appearances but little damaged. We took their place, and continued towards the advancing enemy, but even the 'Fighting Fifth' could not close the entire German Navy with any prospect of success, and a little later we turned too, and followed the battle-cruisers. These were by this time out of range, but ready to join in the fray again when the occasion demanded. Shells were by this time falling close round each ship of the squadron, a little too close, I thought, but then perhaps I was not altogether unbiassed. The Admiral was now altering the speed and course of the squadron frequently, making now black smoke, now white, anything to prevent the enemy getting the range, and their gun-layers from having easy practice. The Admiral, who, with his staff, the Captain, and his dog, remained on the bridge throughout the action except during a five minutes' special 'hate' from the Boche, seemed to have an almost uncanny perception of where the next enemy shots would drop, and somehow we were hardly ever in that unhealthy locality. To take an instance, concentrated salvos of the enemy dropped first two hundred yards short, then one hundred, then fifty. We altered course towards them. This time we shall get it, I thought. But no. They fell fifty yards over! I looked over once and was able to see the shells coming towards us like black insects, getting bigger and finally disappearing. Two of them hit us. I did not look again! The weather was now getting misty, and to make matters worse the sun was hidden by clouds and mist, leaving a very light background against which the enemy had us silhouetted. They were in the mist, which to us looked very dark. It became increasingly difficult to see them, and soon only the flashes from their guns were visible. We closed the range to keep them in sight. Meanwhile the enemy was doing good shooting. I felt the mast shake violently, and thought my last moment had come. Two heavy shells had pierced the glacis abreast the foremast, and, exploding on board, did a lot of damage, killing and wounding a number of men, and wrecking, among other places, part of the mess deck, the fore medical distributing station, the medical store, entered lower conning tower, and the flash from it entered the six-inch cordite hoist. If it had gone down this instead of up, it would have blown up the six-inch magazine, which in turn would have blown up the other magazines, and the ship would have gone, so you see we are a spoilt child of fortune. As it was,

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it set fire to the six-inch cordite in the starboard battery, causing a severe fire, and putting out of action two six-inch guns, killing or badly burning their crews. These guns were in action again later. Even so, it was still dangerous, but the situation was saved by a gallant R.N.R. lieutenant, who plunged into the fire, cleared the blazing cordite from the hoist, superintended the quenching of the fire, and though very badly burned indeed, continued at his post. At the same time the fifteen-inch transmitting station, which was the nerve centre of the gunnery control system, reported itself gassed to the control officer in the main control. In the foretop we challenged: 'Foretop transmitting station.' We could get no answer, except a cloud of nasty smelling gas. This we concluded was caused by a shell bursting and breaking the voice pipe communications. The lights and ventilating shafts to the transmitting stations were temporarily wrecked, but by use of their respirators the transmitting station were able to combat the gas. Communication was immediately established by navy 'phones. The transmitting station must have thought its number was up. A tremendous concussion, blue flame, numbers of white hot splinters down the ventilating shaft and choking T.N.T. gas (T.N.T. gas is not poisonous, but has a very vile smell and hurts the eyes) combined, gave them a nasty shake up. Yet what was this? 'Range 9000 yards, closing 300 yards a minute! More German Dreadnoughts sighted.' They thought out their obituary notices, munched some bread that had been brought down, and trusted to luck to carry them through.

More explosions! Among others one burst in the after-superstructure, and two under it. A lieutenant and midshipman who perceived it were heard to observe (*sotto voce*): 'Bet you it's the wardroom!'—'Bet you it's the gun-room!' The midshipman won. The gun-room, the abode of the junior officers, was wrecked, and so was the midshipmen's study. And it was only yesterday we got that new settee! However, fickle fortune now wobbled in our favour. The sun came out in all his glory, dazzling the German gun-layers and lighting up the German ships till their outlines could be clearly discerned appearing white against the dark background. The positions were reversed. We were the *strafers*, not the *strafees*. Moreover, the battle-cruisers, scenting revenge, joined battle again, and together we gave their battle-cruisers a hot time with our concentrated fire. But we altered course away from the enemy, opening the range to a respectable distance, as all good fifteen-inch

gun ships should do. During this time we got our own back with a vengeance. The *Warspite*, from whose gun-ports in the starboard battery I had earlier seen great tongues of flame leaping, had made herself responsible for two pretty fires on the *Seydlitz*. The *Malaya*, still smarting from a nasty smack in the eye, had the satisfaction of seeing the mainmast of her enemy, the *Moltke*, go by the board; while the *Barham*, gallant flagship, after three or four of her salvos had sent the *Lützow* reeling from the line, was able to take in hand the chastisement of the *Derfflinger*, next in their line, till she too was on fire forward of her after-turret and abaft the foremast. But, alas, all good things must come to an end, and in ten minutes the sun went in! Our worst time was yet to come. Where was our Grand Fleet? Would they never come?

Suddenly out of the mist, on the disengaged side, almost melted into view Admiral Jellicoe's great battleships. Ship after ship, twenty-seven in all, firing their broadsides, led by the gallant Hood in the *Invincible*,¹ swung into line astern of the battle-cruisers. Havelock's glorious Highlanders were not more welcome to rebel-surrounded Lucknow than were those great battleships to Admiral Evan Thomas's hard-pressed and wounded squadron. Throughout the quarters the men could scarce forbear to cheer. The foe, however, would not admit defeat without a struggle. They sank the *Invincible*, leading the Grand Fleet into action, by concentrated gunfire. As soon as our Grand Fleet was observed by the enemy, the German ships turned away from them, thus admitting their inferiority. Then the battle-cruisers and the rest of the fleet after them turned about six to seven points to starboard to cut off the retreating enemy from his base. The Huns had one last concentrated attack on the devoted 5th B.S. A stupendous number of shells, both of large and small calibre, fell like rain about the poor *Queen Elizabeths*,² and especially about the *Barham*, as she led the squadron round the turn after the Grand Fleet. I was so fascinated, I could not help watching. I thought it impossible we could escape out of that inferno without heavy damage, but the ship seemed to bear a charmed life, and escaped almost scatheless through this ordeal. Not so the poor *Warspite*. She received in her engine-room shells which smashed her steering gear. Reluc-

¹ I believe these battle-cruisers joined up with those already present half an hour before this, but I did not notice them at the time.

² The 5th B.S. was composed of four vessels of the *Queen Elizabeth* class, the *Queen Elizabeth* herself being absent.

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tantly, and still firing all her guns till out of range, the *Warspite* left the fight. At this time the Admiral—a large splinter having passed between him and the Flag-Commander and the bridge being unprotected save by hammocks—thought it time to take refuge temporarily with his staff and Jack (his beautiful Airedale) in the armour-protected conning-tower. After five minutes' 'hate' I saw some white smoke, and hundreds of tiny splashes in the water. Suddenly it came to me what it was—Shrapnel! I reported to the control officer that the enemy were firing shrapnel and ducked! 'Are they, by Jove!' he said, and ducked too. 'Keep down, men,' he ordered. We did! We only rose to spot the fall of shot, and then down again. We heard two or three times shell whistle overhead, and once or twice shrapnel went through the foretop. One bullet cut in two a bit of rope quite close to me, while a completely spent splinter trickled down the greatcoat of an officer standing by me. In ten minutes altogether the whole 'hate' was over, and the Hun had shot his bolt.

During this strafe the armoured cruiser-screen under Arbuthnot, which had been ahead of the battle-fleet, crossed the gap between us and the battle-cruisers, while the Grand Fleet filled up the gap in the line ahead. The enemy battle-cruisers here left the fight, turning seaward, and to the best of my knowledge were not again engaged. Whether this was due to damage or to shortage of ammunition, which they had expended lavishly, I cannot say. These armoured cruisers of Arbuthnot's were then going to take cruiser screen astern of the line, the end of which was our squadron. Before he had done this, however, he observed light cruisers, and, I think, destroyers, coming towards us, and though he knew he would come under the fire of the enemy's High Sea Fleet if he stayed where he was, remained, and repulsed the attack. His squadron was overwhelmed with shell, however, and the magazines of the *Defence* and *Black Prince* blew up after this work was done. No finer example of self-sacrifice has yet been witnessed at sea. But the most spectacular sight of all was the *Warrior*. Her after-magazine blew up. I saw this, and thought it was the end, but I was wrong. She turned round, steaming about ten knots, piling on coal, making a dense smoke screen, through a hurricane of shell, still firing her fore 9.2 turret, she yet won through to safety. My heart was in my mouth, and it was the finest sight at sea I have ever seen, or ever hope to see. Our part in the action was almost over. We had sustained for an hour and a half the unequal combat against

heavy odds. It was four ships against a navy, or at any rate as many of a navy as could get into the fighting line against us. That we were not more damaged than we were is due solely to the magnificent handling of squadron and individual ships by men grown grey in the service of their country, and who had spent years solving similar problems. The Boches were demoralised. If this, they argued, is the result with heavy odds in our favour, what will it be when the odds are reversed? They turned and fled, quite rightly.

Unfortunately for them, they could not retreat towards their own coasts, as they would then have to run the gauntlet of our leading ships, an ordeal they were ill-minded to experience. Our battle-cruisers turned about four or five points more to starboard, thus entirely cutting off their retreat. The Grand Fleet had had a short time with moderate light, and at 15,000 yards their fire was accurate and deadly. The *Iron Duke* hit her opposite number six times in succession. The *Agincourt* ahead of us, the warship with fourteen twelve-inch guns, building for Turkey at the beginning of the war, was blazing away with her big guns as if they had been so many quick-firers, or so it seemed to me. The damage done to the enemy was considerable. Badly battered already by us and the battle-cruisers, they received a hammering they will not easily forget. I saw an enemy battleship of the *Kaiser* class blow up amidships, a great sheet of flame shooting up into a cloud of smoke. When this cleared the warship, which had been second in the line, was no longer visible, there being a gap where she had been. Several others were on fire. Unfortunately the sun was setting, and was already behind clouds, and the mist was coming over thicker. The Grand Fleet were engaged for twenty minutes at the outside, while it may well have been much less. The enemy now delivered a destroyer attack, supported by submarines, at the point where our line was turning. This was repulsed by the secondary armament in each ship. They never got closer than four miles, but got off several long-range torpedoes before they were 'downed.' We disabled one destroyer at 7600 yards, and I was lucky enough to see it hit. Our destroyers and light cruisers were sent to finish them off. We turned away temporarily, and the enemy did the same, but soon returned to our old course. One of us saw a periscope, on which we opened fire, but it disappeared almost immediately. A little later we saw a number of bubbly, oily tracks through the water. We were looking out sharply for

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signs of those sinister denizens of the deep (honorary members only) known as torpedoes. Whenever we saw these coming we reported it to the Captain on the bridge. Five of them in turn passed astern of the squirming *Agincourt*, and we were the next in line, and would have been about to turn at this moment; but a more pressing matter was the avoidance of torpedoes. The Captain made his ship wriggle like an eel to keep out of their way. It looked as if one must hit us, but eventually the danger was past. It was at this time the *Marlborough* was hit on her starboard side by a torpedo, a splash went up, and she got a bit of a list to starboard. But she continued in the line firing, and is now, I suppose, as good as new. The new mammoth *Revenge* astern of her, which we had not seen hit, suddenly left the line to port, heeling over to starboard. We thought perhaps she was torpedoed. Not a bit of it! The list was due to her turning fast, and she was only sinking a submarine by ramming; then she returned to her place in the line.

I think the average man in the street has no conception whatever of the extent of the complicated system, the delicate instruments, and provision against accidents necessary to keep the range of an enemy who is continually altering his course and speed. When the mist came down this especially was difficult, and at one time an occasional glimpse of an enemy's masts or funnels, or the flash of her guns, was all there was left to guide us. The only way was to spot the position relative to the enemy of our fall of shot, which from our guns make immense splashes, rising to twice the height of their masts. It was very exasperating to be in this predicament when the enemy was strafing us, though, of course, such a possibility had been foreseen.

Just before the Germans faded out of sight, our battle-cruisers made a further turn to starboard of two or three points. Thus the enemy was now completely cut off from his base, but a cruel fate had ordained that it should soon be pitch dark. The visibility was rapidly decreasing, and at ten o'clock it was not more than a hundred yards! It was moonless, and this we had foreseen, but it was impossible to foresee that it would turn so misty. The glass had been high and steady; it had not been misty for some time, and I think no one had expected this development of a beautiful May day. During the Grand Fleet action the enemy appeared to have been demoralised, since our Fleet were hardly fired on—one shell on the *Colossus* being their only hit. Their firing was ragged

at this time, as it always was after heavy punishment from us. Our shooting, on the contrary, maintained the same high level under heavy fire, which speaks well for the endurance and morale of our men. At ten o'clock I went down from the foretop for the first time to eat.

We had to 'mess' in the ward-room, as our demesne had been obliterated from recognition. Everyone was anxiously looking round to see if his friends were safe, and to exchange experiences. In ten minutes we had made a hearty meal, and, much refreshed, proceeded to reconnoitre and to look at the damage. The decks were, of course, awash with water, turned on to minimise the danger of fire. The few serious fires had been extinguished by the gallant efforts of the fire parties. These each consisted of a number of men and an engineer officer. The sickly and unpleasant odour of the T.N.T. gas pervaded everywhere. This did not leave the ship altogether for a very long time. The gun-room and after-superstructure were unrecognisable. A large sideboard that had been in the gun-room had vanished into thin—or rather thick—air. The Engineer Commander's cabin, which was adjacent to the gun-room, separated by a bulkhead, and which we had always coveted as a potential anteroom, was now, by the courtesy of the Hun, one with the gun-room. The bulkhead was torn away. Everywhere steel decks and bulkheads were ripped through by splinters, as if they had been so many pieces of canvas. I picked up a piece as big as my fist. Everywhere the *matelot* could be seen collecting 'souvenirs.' By a strange coincidence a large model of the ship, which had been struck by splinters, was damaged in almost the identical positions of the damage in the ship herself. Luckily the ship was not in any way damaged in her vitals, which was the great thing. The mess-decks and battery decks were a sight to appal the stoutest heart. Dead and badly wounded men everywhere, decks flooded, gaping holes in the deck, and an appalling stench. Such things are unavoidable in war. After a short respite I returned to the foretop.

Soon after this a wonderful sight unfolded itself. Our destroyers and light cruisers were darting hither and thither in search of the enemy, so that when morning broke our Grand Fleet might bring him to book. Enemy destroyers were presumably looking for us, but hardly, I think, with a view to bringing his High Sea Fleet into action with ours again. Our destroyers were looking, also, for any damaged and disabled ships of the enemy that had been

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unable to retire with their fleet. We believed that the *Lützow* and *Derfflinger*, our private enemies, were in this condition, and probably the *Seydlitz*, also one of the *Pommern* class, and at least one *Kaiser* class battleship. Some of these may possibly have got back to port, but certainly not the lot. The first two, I think, must have gone down during the night. I noticed that one or two of their ships had been disabled and isolated, and two examples of them specially force themselves on my memory. One was the spectacle of an enemy ship with three funnels, half-way between the opposing navies, which was no longer able to steam and into which every British ship poured a couple of broadsides as she passed. She was getting a wretched time, having hundreds of shells fired at her, many bursting on board. I think this was either the old three-funnelled battleship of the *Pommern* class, or else the four-funnelled armoured cruiser *Roon*, with one funnel shot away. The other ship I noticed specially was something about the size of a light cruiser. We passed her on the disengaged side, only a few hundred yards away. Her bow and stern only could be seen sticking out of the water, with men clustering on them, waiting to be taken off by a destroyer coming up to save them. I do not know whether this ship was one of ours or one of the enemy. I think also that some of their light cruisers and many destroyers must have been sunk, though, of course, with the mist and bad light it was really impossible to say what they had lost. But to return to our muttons. At about twenty past ten I saw the flash of guns, searchlights switched on, and heavy firing from light guns. This continued most of the dark hours in almost every quarter of the battlefield. This night engagement is, to the best of my knowledge, the first one fought at sea at night since Rodney, in 1780, captured by moonlight a Spanish convoy and its escort in the West Indies. Its only parallel in modern times is the attack made by the Japanese on the Russian fleet at anchor in Port Arthur. The action was a magnificent sight. The firing lit up the sky as if by lightning most of the night. Both sides were repelling destroyer attacks, light cruisers and destroyers on each side were engaging each other. Little black destroyers passed quite close to us, with splashes all around them. We could almost have acted as 'rake' party to spot the fall of shot! I could see shells burst on a destroyer, great sparks flying up, small craft on fire, and flashes from the guns everywhere. We did not know who was who, and it was rather exciting. It was far better than the search-

light exhibition in the Test Mobilisation at Spithead way back in '14. Our destroyers searched the seas for their damaged fleet, and some of them had the luck to find them. For years and years their attacks had been carried out in manœuvres, and at last it was the real thing. Several attacks were made, and it seems likely that at least three German battleships were thus put *hors de combat*. One of them got home on their leading battleship with three torpedoes. She crumpled up amidships and sank. Once their fleet ran into one of our flotillas, who made their attack and fled at full speed into the darkness. Of course, they do not wait to see what damage they have done, which would be inviting destruction, but at full speed, making heavy black smoke, dodge the searchlight beams and the enemy's fire as best they can. Once two great splashes fell a few yards short of us. We had no idea whence they came, and it was really very annoying. It was no good switching on searchlights, which would only betray our position to enemy destroyers or submarines, so we altered course, and fortunately no further shots came. The German fleet may at this time have been quite close to us without our knowledge, as it was pitch dark. It was no good dividing our forces altogether, as in the night, at short range, the combatant with most ships might win. They must have turned sixteen points in the night, and got back to their protected harbours round the rear of our line. Our submarines, and mines which we had laid, probably accounted for some more of them before they reached port. I shall never forget that night action as long as I live. I think it is up to Mr. Wyllie to set it down on canvas.

It was light again by three, and we eagerly scanned the horizon with glasses in the hope of sighting some enemy vessel. Our destroyers, which at this time were scattered over the North Sea, and a couple of hundred more which had arrived from other bases during the night, had signalled some of their reports. The *Lützow*, our favourite enemy, was reported disabled, others were reported missing or in a sinking condition. For about ten hours we scoured the whole area of conflict, with the hope of finding some of them. About 5 a.m. we heard some firing, which was caused by light cruisers driving off a Zeppelin. We sighted one or two submarines, and turned for the periscope of one. It disappeared before we got there, but everyone in the ship remembers having felt a bump at this time. The *Valiant* signalled to us that we had sunk a submarine. She said that we went over the spot where it

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disappeared, and that oil rose to the surface when we passed. Our bag was now two brace—a destroyer, a submarine, and two battle-cruisers. The latter two did not sink while in sight of us, but were seen in a sinking condition, and I think must have sunk during the night. At any rate, during the whole of our search we did not find any enemy warships, and I certainly think some of these must have been too much damaged to get back to port.

The wind had risen considerably during the night, and in the course of the following day reached the proportions of a pretty storm. It is a curious fact that after many of the great sea-battles of history a storm has arisen immediately. The defeat of the Spanish Armada, the last fight of the *Revenge* off Flores, Trafalgar, and the Falkland Islands battle, furnish, perhaps, the most striking instances. This would have made towing impossible, as it did eventually in the case of the poor *Warrior* on our side, and it would have imperilled the safety of ships rendered unseaworthy during the action. We came across a great deal of wreckage and large patches of oil, which marked the spots where ships had met their doom. It is a curious fact that we sank a German in almost the identical spot where the *Queen Mary* was blown up. Of this I am not quite sure, but I believe it to be true. They had advanced over the ground over which we had retreated, and this accounts for the fact that an officer and some men from the *Queen Mary* were saved by the enemy's boats.

All this morning we saw immense numbers of dead fish, large and small, floating on the surface of the water. Most of the shells that dropped in the water exploded, and the concussion, I think, had killed the fish. I remember that when I was in the Tropics we used to blast fish by detonation of a few pounds of gun-cotton under water, and caught thus a large number. As about ten thousand shells with more than half a ton of high-explosive in each (besides many small shells and some torpedoes) exploded in the water, the bathing fatalities among the piscatory creation must have been very numerous. By this time (half-past seven) we began to be aware of an aching void in the inner man, the spice of excitement which had hitherto kept us going was now missing, and we replenished our bunkers with some bread and butter and tinned salmon hauled up inside the mast from the galley at its foot. As I remember to have been the case in the Falklands¹ battle, there

¹ The writer's account of the Battle of the Falkland Isles appeared in the CORNHILL MAGAZINE for April 1915.

were some non-combatant spectators. At different times during the action we passed trawlers, both British and neutral (Dutch and Danish). It is, I suppose, just possible these may have picked up some survivors. Whether it is easier to catch live fish than newly dead ones I am not sufficiently a fisherman to say; they probably felt very strongly on the subject one way or other.

The carpenters had been hard at work for some time patching up the holes and keeping the ship seaworthy. The electricians were doing their best to restore the lights and ventilation, as a number of ventilating trunks and motors were smashed up. The surgeons and sick-berth staff were doing their best for the wounded and covering up the dead. The freezing foretop party were still looking out for any enemy 'in earth or sky or sea.' The armourers were repairing defects in the mechanism of the guns. The officers and men in the comfortable transmitting stations and similar places were sleeping the sleep (in our opinion) of the unjust. You see, it was very cold in the foretop, and they were so insulting to us! 'Are you nice and warm, and would you like your sun-helmets? We're so comfortable down here.' The Admiral and his dog I saw lying together curled up asleep on the bridge. We searched the whole battlefield without finding any enemy, and as it was no use staying longer than was necessary in enemy waters, where there were almost certain to be enemy mines and submarines, at about twelve o'clock we set course for home.

We were just a little sad that, after having made such sacrifices to get the German fleet into the position we did, the Grand Fleet were baulked of the full fruit of victory by the hand of Nature; but we had seen and heard quite enough to know that we had had a great victory. The worst wounded were placed in the chapel, which was untouched. The stench of the explosives, mingled with that of the poor fellows killed, made the ship very unpleasant. We committed twenty of the most mutilated bodies to the deep with full naval honours that evening. One or two died of wounds that day. A doctor who had attended wounded from the Front, and had seen hundreds a week, told me that he had never seen men so badly wounded as we had. It was the burns that caused the worst injuries. The wreckage, not really very serious, looked appalling. Steel bulkheads standing out at any old angle, everything wet, steel and wood splinters everywhere in great heaps, and some places unrecognisable. It did not look quite as bad when the great heaps of wreckage had been removed. I lost many

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of my possessions in the gun-room, including a travelling chess-board with ivory men. This had clean disappeared. On this day, however, I was solemnly presented with a pathetic little ivory white knight, the only warrior out of my two little armies that had survived the battle. I think I shall keep him as a mascot. A Union Jack and an Ensign had splinter holes through them, and will be great trophies. The doctors had wonderful escapes. One had the step of the steel ladder on which he was standing taken from under him by a splinter, and he was unhurt. That night I could not sleep in my accustomed place, as water was pouring through the deck above through a splinter hole.

Next day we got the Poldhu news. To our great disappointment, especially that of the *matelots* and the wounded, our victory was taken as a disaster, and the papers were saying that 'Somebody had blundered.' I don't think anyone had dreamt that it would not be taken as a great victory. Even with the Admiralty announcement as it stood, the attitude of some of the newspapers was inexcusable. They seemed to have no faith in the Navy whatever. However, we enjoyed a good laugh over the Kaiser's speech, and he cheered us up a lot. The victors whose country thought they'd lost, and the defeated whose country thought they'd won! We're a rum country! About noon we dropped anchor. We were the great ship to see, being the flagship, and having most damage of the ships present, and Admirals, Captains, Commanders, and Lieutenants galore all wanted to be shown over the ship. Boats were coming alongside every minute or so, and all sorts of excuses were found to get on board. 'I have an important letter to deliver to the Admiral's office,' said one; and another, this one a two-ring naval constructor, with a camera under his arm, 'My Admiral wants me to see the damage.' Any amount of invitations to dinner came from curious officers in other ships. Even Jellicoe himself came on board. I was struck, on coming in, by the number of new hospital ships all ready to come alongside.

We had our oil pumped in (not messy coal like the rest of the Grand Fleet), and were then told to prepare for sea. More Boche hunting? Not this time. The Admiral had struck his flag and made a signal, in which he congratulated the officers and ship's company on their behaviour in the action; said he hoped to rehoist his flag in the ship before the next action, wished everyone a good passage and a pleasant and well-deserved LEAVE, which cheered up the ship's company more than any newspapers could have done.

England as a whole was by this time condescending to call it honours easy, except in Devonport and Portsmouth. These places, the latter of which had suffered especially severely, and where hardly anyone did not feel it personally, had, I heard, every flag flying triumphantly, which I think showed a very good spirit indeed. The harbour where we came in gave us a great reception, all the town turning out on to the bank and cheering us, as did also the ships in the harbour. I think the civilians were a little disappointed with the outward damage. I think they expected at least one mast and a funnel gone by the board, a few fires, and a couple of turrets hanging by a thread ('some thread') over the side.

Then the Commander-in-Chief came. Hundreds of 'dockyard maties' came on board, though for about twelve hours they seemed to stand about staring and not doing any work. The only possible topic of conversation now was leave. How much?

At last the Commander spoke to the assembled ship's company. 'There will be three weeks' leave for all watches,' he said, 'starting from noon to-day.' With which very satisfactory conclusion I propose to terminate this narrative.

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LITERARY ACROSTICS.

THE Editor of THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE offers prizes to the value of at least £3 to the most successful solvers of this series of four Literary Acrostics. There will also be consolation prizes, two or more in number: the winners of these will be entitled to choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue. And, further, every month a similar prize of books will be awarded to the sender of the correct solution that is opened first.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 40.

(*The Fourth of the Series.*)

'Sweet, when the morn is gray;
Sweet, when they've cleared away
Lunch; and at close of day
—— ————,

1. 'As —— to the world, is Science to the soul.'
2. 'A quick deep breath did the damsel draw,
Like the struck fawn in the ——.'
3. 'I heard of the discovery of the American
hemisphere, and wept with —— over
the hapless fate of its original inhabitants.'
4. 'A word or two of kindness makes him
rapturous; a harsh expression sinks him
to despair.'
5. 'In every man's career are certain points
Whereon he dares not be ——.'
6. 'I cannot be a man with wishing, therefore I
will die a woman with grieving.'
7. 'I cannot condemn a man for ignorance,
but behold him with as much pity as I
do ——.'
8. 'The snow fell hissing in the brine,
And the billows frothed like ——.'

RULES.

1. Only one answer may be sent to each light.
2. Every correct light and upright will score one point.
3. With his answer every solver must send the coupon that is printed on page x of 'Book Notes' in the preliminary pages of this issue.
4. At the foot of his answer every solver must write his pseudonym (consisting of one word), and nothing else. His name and address should be written at the back.
5. Solvers must on no account write either the quotations or the references on the same paper as their answers. It is not necessary, or even desirable, to send them at all.
6. Solvers who write a second letter to correct a previous answer, must send the complete solution as they wish it, and not merely state the desired alteration.
7. Answers to Acrostic No. 40 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE, 50A Albemarle Street, London, W. 1, and must arrive not later than June 21.

ANSWER TO NO. 39.

1. M	usacu	S
2. E	loquen	T
3. A	rdou	R
4. D	ant	E
5. O	smund	A
6. W	isdo	M

PROEM: *Ode. Intimations of Immortality.*

LIGHTS:

1. *Written in a blank leaf of Macpherson's Ossian.*
2. *Ecclesiastical Sonnets, ii., 40.*
3. *To the Spade of a Friend.*
4. *Scorn not the Sonnet.*
5. *Poems on the Naming of Places, iv.*
6. *The Kitten and Falling Leaves.*

Acrostic No. 38 ('The Isles of Greece') was fairly difficult. The first, fourth, and seventh lights all proved fatal to many solvers, and even the fifth and sixth claimed a few victims. There were only 54 answers quite correct, while 50 competitors missed one light, and 36 missed more than one. Besides these, there were 3 answers that did not conform to the rules.

The monthly prize is taken by 'Etheldreda,' whose answer was the first correct one opened. Miss B. S. Franey, The Grange, Ely, Cambs., is entitled to choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue.

THE NINTH SERIES.

The Extra Acrostic ('Ewa-yea') was set for six competitors, and it served its purpose in separating them. Roman scored 5 points, Lass 4, Penthemeron 5, and Oiseau 2; Amy and Square did not send in answers. The destination of the prizes is now decided: Karshish and Lapin share £3, as announced in the April number; Roman and Lass will both choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue. During the tenth series these four solvers will suffer the usual penalty of success: they will be ineligible for prizes.

Karshish is Miss Burney, Rippingale, Bolsover Road, Eastbourne; Lapin is Miss Peile, 7 Cosway Street, London, N.W. 1; Roman is Miss Phelps, 8 Ormonde Mansions, 100A Southampton Row, W.C. 1; Lass is Mrs. Steedman, Steventon Rectory, Basingstoke.

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NEW SERIES, VOL. LX.

WILLIAM L. HARRIS

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Adam's Peak. By <i>Ibn Sabīl</i>	458
Addison, <i>see Will Addison</i> .	
Appleby School: An Extra-Illustration to Boswell. By <i>Algernon Gissing</i>	404
Arachne: The Spider. By <i>Barbara Euphan Todd</i>	353
Arnold, Matthew, Newman and. By <i>The Rev. Henry Tristram</i>	309
Austin, Brig.-General H. H., C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.: A Lost Train	577
Blessingtonian Idyll, A. By <i>John Kendal</i>	473
Bradley, Shelland: The Marriage of Peter Khan	585
Brighter London. By <i>Laurence Kirk</i>	741
Bunch of Balloons, A. By <i>Barbara Euphan Todd</i>	548
Carlyle, <i>see O. W. Firkins</i> .	
Charles. By <i>Laurence Kirk</i>	299
Chronology of Pickwick, The. By <i>The Hon. Mr. Justice MacKinnon</i>	537
Crump, L. M., C.I.E.: Glaucer's Tomb	88
'Customs' of Old Dahomey, The: From the Journal of <i>Capt. Luce, R.N.</i> in 1862-3	72
Cutty Stool, The. By <i>Laurence Housman</i>	100
Dahomey, <i>see 'Customs' of Old Dahomey</i> .	
Daly, Hyacinthe, and Timms, John: Water Divining: Scientific and Commercial	415
Death's-Head Moth, <i>see Forman</i> .	
Delafield, E. M.: The Philistine	711
Dickens', Charles, Plays I have Seen. By <i>William Farren</i>	85
Diggers, The. By <i>Katharine Keeling</i>	723
Faithless Shepherd, The. By <i>Susan Glaspell</i>	51
Farren, William: Charles Dickens' Plays I have seen	85
Firkins, O. W.: Two Passengers for Chelsea	163
Forman W. Courthope: The Mysterious Cry of the Death's-Head Hawk- Moth: What Hudson Thought	469
Fowler, C. A. and Huxley, Leonard: Will Addison's Love Letters. I-II. 601, 694	275
From Thoughts to Things. By <i>Prof. Fraser Harris, M.D., D.Sc., &c.</i>	

	PAGE
General of the Rifi, A. By <i>H.</i>	558
<i>Gill, Eric H. N., F.Z.S.</i> : Mungroo	194
<i>Gissing, Algernon</i> : Appleby School : An Extra-Illustration to Boswell	404
<i>Glaspell, Susan</i> : The Faithless Shepherd	51
Glaucon's Tomb. By <i>L. M. Crump</i>	88
<i>H.</i> A General of the Rifi	558
<i>Harris, Professor Fraser, M.D., D.Sc., B.Sc. (Lond.)</i> : From Thoughts to Things	275
<i>Harvey, William Fryer</i> : Some Miner Poets	40
Herkomer School, The. By <i>Flora Thomas</i>	336
<i>Housman, Laurence</i> : The Cutty Stool	100
Hudson, W. H., see <i>Forman</i> .	
<i>Huxley, Julian</i> : The Tissue-Culture King	422
<i>Huxley, Leonard, and Fowler, C. A.</i> : Will Addison's Love Letters. I-II.	601, 694
<i>Ibn Sabil</i> : Adam's Peak	458
In the Boboli Gardens, Florence. By <i>Vernon Knowles</i>	670
Johnson, Dr., see Appleby School.	
Jutland, The Battle of, or Little Fisher Bank. By a Midshipman in H.M.S. <i>Barham</i>	749
<i>Keeling, Katharine</i> : The Diggers	723
<i>Kendal, John</i> : A Blessingtonian Idyll	473
<i>Kirk, Laurence</i> : Charles	299
— Brighter London	741
<i>Knowles, Vernon</i> : In the Boboli Gardens, Florence	670
Lady with the Red Hair, The. By <i>Stanley J. Weyman</i> . I-II.	149, 285
<i>Lawrence, C. E.</i> : Swift and Stella	672
Literary Acrostics. 9th Series. XXXV-VI	127, 255
— 10th Series. XXXVII-XL	383, 510, 639, 767
Lost Train, A. By <i>Brig.-General H. H. Austin, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.</i>	577
Luce, Capt., R.N. : From the Journal of, in 1862-3, The 'Customs' of Old Dahomey	72
<i>Ludovici, Anthony</i> : Further Personal Reminiscences of Auguste Rodin. II-III	111, 213
<i>MacKinnon, F. D., Hon. Mr. Justice</i> : The Chronology of Pickwick	537
Madrid and its Life To-day. By <i>Charles Petrie</i>	320

CONTENTS

vii

	PAGE
Marriage of Peter Khan, The. By <i>Shelland Bradley</i>	585
Marsh, <i>Charles Fielding</i> : Mawkins : More Reminiscences of a Norfolk Vicarage	564
Mawkins : More Reminiscences of a Norfolk Vicarage. By <i>Charles Fielding Marsh</i>	564
Miner Poets, Some. By <i>William Fryer Harvey</i>	40
Motive Power and Industry. By <i>John D. Troup, M.I.Mech.E.</i>	185
Mungroo. By <i>Eric H. N. Gill, F.Z.S.</i>	194
Mysterious Cry of the Death's-Head Hawk-Moth, The : What Hudson Thought. By <i>W. Courthorpe Forman</i>	469
'New Lamps for Old' : Charles Dickens on Art. By <i>Elizabeth Walmsley</i>	203
Newman and Matthew Arnold. By <i>The Rev. Henry Tristram</i>	309
Old London Coal Cart, The. By <i>Aileen Orr</i>	329
Orr, <i>Aileen</i> : The Old London Coal Cart	329
Petrie, <i>Charles</i> : Madrid and its Life To-day	320
Philistine, The. By <i>E. M. Delafield</i>	711
Pickthall, <i>Marmaduke</i> : The Student and the Tower	682
Pickwick : The Chronology of. By <i>The Hon. Mr. Justice MacKinnon</i>	537
Rayson, <i>Thomas</i> : Water Divining	346
Rodin, <i>Auguste</i> : Further Personal Reminiscences of. By <i>Anthony M. Ludovici</i> . II-III	111, 213
Salon of Yesterday, A. By <i>Sigma</i>	21
Sigma : A Salon of Yesterday	21
Stokes, <i>Denny C.</i> : The Way of the Panther. Chapters VI-End	1, 129, 257, 385, 513
Student and the Tower, The. By <i>Marmaduke Pickthall</i>	682
Swift and Stella. By <i>C. E. Lawrence</i>	672
Ten Years Ago: Battle of Jutland, The, or Little Fisher Bank. By a Midshipman in H.M.S. <i>Barham</i>	749
Thomas, <i>Flora</i> : The Herkomer School	336
Timms, <i>John</i> , and <i>Hyacinthe Daly</i> : Water Divining : Scientific and Commercial	415
Tissue-Culture King, The : A Biological Fantasy. By <i>Julian Huxley</i>	422
Todd, <i>Barbara Euphan</i> : Arachne : The Spider	353
— A Bunch of Balloons	548

	PAGE
<i>Tristram, The Rev. Henry</i> : Newman and Matthew Arnold . . .	309
<i>Troup, J. D., M.I.Mech.E.</i> : Motive Power and Industry . . .	185
Two Passengers for Chelsea. By <i>O. W. Firkins</i> . . .	163
<i>Walmsley, Elizabeth</i> : 'New Lamps for Old' : Charles Dickens on Art .	203
Water Divining. By <i>Thomas Rayson</i>	346
Water Divining : Scientific and Commercial. By <i>Hyacinthe Daly and John Timms</i>	415
Way of the Panther, The. By <i>Denny C. Stokes</i> . VI-End.	
	1, 129, 257, 385, 513
<i>Weyman, Stanley J.</i> : The Lady with the Red Hair. I-II . . .	149, 285
Who Rideth Alone. By <i>P. C. Wren</i> . I-XIV	227, 354, 484, 618, 641
Will Addison's Love Letters. By <i>C. A. Fowler and Leonard Huxley</i> .	
I-II.	601, 694
<i>Wren, P. C.</i> : Who Rideth Alone. I-XIV	227, 354, 484, 618, 641



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